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->From the Editor’s Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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I was at work yesterday, outside taking a quick smoke break, when I overheard two colleagues talking about their work with computers. One of the women was talking about the fact that she seems to be able to type faster using a computer than her typewriter of yesteryear. However, her spelling "skills" seemed to have waned over the years. She added that having access to an online spell-checker made things easier.

One thing led to another and the two women started to discuss how their children were so adept with computers, including one’s 12-year old. They were describing how their children were so much better than their inept parents using their computers. And this led to how much their kids used computers to do their schoolwork.

The thing that really caught my attention was that one of the women was describing her son as a straight-A student, but couldn’t spell very well. I don’t know about you, but the first thing that came to my mind was how could a student receive an ’A’ in something like English Composition and not be able to spell well? The answer: computers.

The student can compose a report, an analysis of Shakespeare’s work, or something similar, but doesn’t have to know how to spell as long as he or she can utilize a spell-checker on their computer! This is education?

Don’t get me wrong, I strongly believe that today’s students need to learn basic computer skills to survive in today’s world. But, I believe there needs to be a way to keep computers a secondary skill. Students need to know how to write a composition and spell correctly before learning how to type them on a computer. If not, basic learning skills will erode and change.

I don’t believe this scenario applies to all students. I’m sure that many know how to spell well and can actually read what they write. But to hear a parent say that she has an ’A’-student child who can’t spell is outrageous.

You hear all the time that college graduates cannot read or write; they can’t fill out a simple job application. I wonder how many of these same students were proficient with computer use?

And one of the last things this mother was telling her friend as I was going back to work was that her son wanted a voice-activation device for Christmas because he didn’t like to type! He could just verbalize what he wanted to write and the computer would do it for him! I think we’re getting closer and closer to "The Jetsons" era faster than we realize! Think about it.

Until next time...

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->A Moment with Randy Looney
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you’re worth it.

I don’t know about anyone else, but I’m proud of my grey hair. I’ve worked hard for it. I’ve earned every one of them and, damn it, I’m not going to cover them up. And I find that having two hundred plus channels simply means that there’s about fifty times as many things I don’t want to watch.

I can remember being proud that my children were average. That meant that I was doing about as good a job of rearing them as anyone else was, and they’d have the tools they would need to make their own way in the world once they left the nest. Never once did I give one of my children a ’time-out’. When they needed it, they got a spanking. Today’s parents don’t seem to realize that youngsters don’t know or care about logic or reasoning. They live in the moment. If one of those particular moments happened to bring poor behavior that was unacceptable or hazardous, I made sure that they had a disagreeable stimuli to relate it to. They all ended up well adjusted, happy, and successful in their chosen lives. They learned to understand that there were consequences to their actions and that sometimes "no" is enough of a reason. Most of them have even taken the time to actually say "thank you"

While all the things that have to be done do get done these days, the interaction is gone. Children still get read bedtime stories, but by computerized teddy bears. It seems to me that that’s what parents are for. Taking the time to read to my children is one of the activities that shall forever remain in my mind. I can’t remember my first beeper number or my first job interview, but I can still see my son’s eyes widen with excitement as I read his favorite story to him all those years ago.

With all the things that happen around us today with hardly a hint of concentration on our part, is it any wonder that we often feel disconnected from the world and feel that vague yearning for something slower and more basic?

The one facet of modern life that I actually take comfort in is one that you might take for granted: Bumperstickers!

I chuckle every time I see one of those "Proud Parent of a (fill-in-the-blank) School Honor Student" bumperstickers. I chuckle because I have one that says, "Your Child May Be An Honor Student, But You’re Still An Idiot".

And those "I <heart> My Dog" bumperstickers are just the start of their genre. How about "I <club> My Wife", or "I <spade> My Cat"? The only thing that I’m not happy about is that these snippets are what now pass for wit and wisdom. If it takes more than thirty seconds to digest, the popular consensus is that it’s not worth the effort. For that very reason I wonder how many of the people who began reading this article have made it this far.

If you HAVE made it this far, congratulations. You’re... Special.

’Till next time,

Randy Looney

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. I had an interesting experience the other day that continues to stick in my mind for one reason or another.

A friend of mine called me, all in a panic, and asked if I knew anyone who could digitize a picture for him quickly. It seems that he had been telling some relative or other that he could have their wedding picture digitized for them. They had provided him with the photograph on their last visit, which was several months ago. They had now returned to our fair state, and were expecting a floppy disk with a digitized picture on it.

There are two basic reasons that the picture hadn’t been scanned and digitized...

First, this friend tends to bite off more than he can chew. He probably got caught in one of his own boasts and couldn’t figure a way out on his own.

Second, he really isn’t a computer person. He has a computer, but he’s not one to dig into the guts of it and try new things.

So after beating around the bush for what I considered entirely too long, he finally asked if I knew of anyone who could digitize a picture for him.

"Sure," I said, "bring it over and I’ll do it. It’ll only take a couple of minutes."

"Really?", he asked. "Doesn’t it take, like, forever?"

"No," I answered the fool who had obviously confused scanning a picture with painting a portrait, "it’s almost as quick as making a copy."

"But the last time I had a copy of a picture done it took a week. I don’t have that kind of time."

Now quickly losing my patience, I said, "That’s not the kind of copy I’m talking about. I mean a regular, run of the mill photo copy. Now just bring the damned picture over and I’ll show you that even you could do it... if you practiced a bit."

So he showed up, an hour late (true to form) with the picture that had started this whole thing. It was a good picture. Just the kind of wedding picture that every bride hopes for. Why they entrusted it to this guy is beyond me. Not that he’s a bad sort, just that he’s the kind that ’things’ just seem to happen to. It wouldn’t be too much of a stretch to imagine some catastrophe befalling the photograph while in his possession.

To make a long story short, the picture got digitized in short order, converted to several different resolutions and formats, and saved onto a

floppy (which I supplied because he forgot to bring one along). As he was walking out the door, he offhandedly said, "Huh, I didn't realize that your Atari could do PC stuff like that."

"Guess you were wrong then, huh?" was my only reply. I know, I know, I should have given him the "It's not the computer, but the computer user" speech, but it's really a moot point with most people these days. They figure that if it can't do it out-of-the-box, then it just can't do it at all. Luckily, there are still some of us around who know better.

Now, let's get down to business and get busy with the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

Geert Poels asks:

"I was wondering whether the Atari SC1425 color monitor could be attached to a pc? Is it just another cable or through a convertor?"

Dan Phillips tells Geert:

"I suppose it's possible, if you have a CGA/EGA video card.

Considering max resolution of 640X200 interlaced, would it be worth it? You might be able to sell it for enough to get a cheap used VGA monitor."

NIck Bales adds:

"If your video card has an RGB output, why not.
But Windows in 640x200 would be no fun, believe me."

John McDermott adds his thoughts:

"If that's the colour one that works on an ST and STe like the Philips 8833 then the answer is no unless you intend to use CGA or an EGA card that runs on a CGS monitor. No modern operating systems (ie above windows 3.11) support these resolutions."

Bob King asks for help with his web browsing setup:

"I use CAB 2.5/Magic 6/Outside/Sting/Stoop/Videl Inside on my 4meg Falcon with CAB working in and taking memory from my 150Meg P partition (2 Gig drive) to 'surf'. Most of the time stable, but a long page loading often locks up with 'System stack overflow. System Halted'. [I] Have CAB defaulted to load no images and change to load images when get to final page. Work in 800x592x256 on RGB and use Zetnet as ISP. Any ideas?"

Ronald Andersson, one of the minds behind STInG, tells Bob:

"On a 4MB Falcon, using MagiC and the normal boot stuff needed then, such as NVDI which you do not mention but I assume you use anyway (CAB wants it), there is not much memory left when you have booted up into a decently recent desktop.

Using OUTSIDE is no real help in this, as very few auto folder TSR's are capable of being swapped without problems (NVDI, STinG, etc), which is why OUTSIDE also ignores swapping for normal TSRs. This is absolutely

necessary as interrupt routines do not normally support being swapped. (They are time critical, and may conflict with hard disk access anyway.)

This means that not much RAM will be available for virtual memory swapping and that leads to ’intense’ swapping when running any large applications that need a lot of memory, such as CAB.

In all cases I have seen that leads to MagiC bombing (sooner or later) in the way you describe (with some variations of course). I do not think this has anything to do with either STinG or CAB as such, but rather that it indicates a generic problem that MagiC has with supervisor stack allocation and RAM allocation in general. This is naturally further strained by the virtual memory swapping which causes stack intensive calls to be made from inside other system functions, thus using the stacks to a much greater extent than would be the case without virtual memory.

The only good solution is to upgrade to more physical memory, and the easiest way to do that is by acquiring a 14MB ST-RAM board."

Bob tells Ronald:

"Thanks that all makes sense. I had an idea that it all came down to lack of real RAM. Yes I use NVDI. I can just run CAB 2.5 in a stripped down (no virtual RAM) system, but can’t go online. Demo CAB 2.7, won’t load at all at 256 cols.. On the use of NVDI, I loaded a local Ultimate TOS Index Page (the sound one) into CAB 2.5 without NVDI or OUTSIDE (CAB ran in real RAM) at VI VGA x256, it took 19 secs. With NVDI and OUTSIDE (CAB running in virtual RAM), it took 22 secs. Obviously. with that kind of drag from virtual RAM use, I will be getting some real RAM when I can afford it. Thanks again."

When "Steve" asks about using a CD-ROM drive on their Atari, John Wilkinson posts:

"I know there is ExtenDOS Pro v2.4a, but a new ExtenDOS Gold has been released some time ago.

I think all versions are in english. The author Roger Burrows certainly has an english sounding name, even though he is Canadian?

System Solutions will tell you the latest version of ExtenDOS Gold, but as far as I know it doesn’t read MacHFS yet. Spin 0.34 DOES, I am told by the author Julian Reschke, read Mac HFS CD’s."

Julian Reschke adds:

"The official version is German, but there is also a separate archive with english instructions. Both are available from

http://www.muenster.de/~reschke/soft_e.html#spin"

Having recently taken the plunge into Spin, I jump in and tell Steve:

"I too am a die-hard ExtenDOS user. It is indeed very easy to use and reliable....

Or was until I switched to MagiC for most of my needs. Now ExtenDOS will not find the CD ROM Drives I have when run under MagiC, even though the exact same setup runs flawlessly under plain TOS (both 1.04 on my

STacy and 3.06 on my TT).

I switched to Spin a week ago and even though it is a bit more involved to set up than ExtenDOS I like it a lot.

I seem to remember that you were installing this under MagiC, right? Well, installation for MagiC is a bit easier than for plain TOS. Derryck Croker's translation of the docs is an absolute must for us language-challenged types tho."

Derryck takes the opportunity to set me straight about the english translation's authorship:

"It was Peter West (of the TransAction team - nothing to do with the trucker's federation which has hijacked the name by the way, I'm just the spear-carrier!"

I tell Derryck:

"Well, what the heck. Take the gratitude anyway as our gift. <Smile> Of course, you'll have to share it with Peter.

I did/do have the latest version of ExtenDOS, which I like a lot. It's a terrific program that does exactly what I wanted it to do...

Until one of the CPXs (I think) messed up something, and that made ExtenDOS extremely unhappy.... but only under MagiC for some strange reason. Under plain vanilla TOS, it was just fine.

I finally got tired of messing about with everything and got the docs from your site, and followed the link to the latest version of SPIN.

I do still like ExtenDOS a bit more than SPIN, but SPIN works without fail with MagiC. So I use SPIN under MagiC and ExtenDOS under TOS. Best of both worlds, eh?

Derryck also tells Steve:

"If you go to my web site you will be able to collect full English docs and RSC file for Spin! - and there is a link to Julian's web site for the binaries themselves."

Ted Parrett asks for help with the new version of STinG:

"I recently installed Sting 1.20. Before doing so I renamed my Sting 1.15 set up in order not to lose the settings just in case there were problems with the installation of 1.20.

I managed to get 1.20 working OK but have noticed a problem with the Dialer in that even when I have disconnected the modem via the Sting Dialer dialog, when I next boot up and call up the Dialer it recognizes the modem as being online even when it isn't. It will do this even if the modem is not even switched on. If I then use the Dialer dialog to disconnect the modem and exit the Dialer and then recall it in the same session it will recognize the modem as being offline but if I reboot and then call up the dialer it will again indicate that the modem is online. Any thoughts on what I have set incorrectly. Unfortunately my saving of the Sting 1.15 set was faulty as although it is still working OK I'm getting the same problem as above and it definitely wasn't like that before I installed Sting 1.20"

Kenneth Medin tells Ted quite simply:

"You have the modem serial port marked as active in the "STinG Port Setup" cpx.

Cure: Deactivate the port and save.

When you click on "Connect" in the dialer the port will be activated by the dialer."

Ted tells Kenneth:

"Thanks for the tip... It worked !!"

Ronald Andersson posts this bit of info that might be helpful if you use STinG:

"I've now experimented extensively (for appx 30 Hours) with various STinG tweaks and improvements. I found that one control has a strong effect on the TCP upload speed, and is probably responsible for the low speeds some of you have had. Partially responsible I should say, because it is also very much due to slowness in ISP responses.

The DEF_RTT setting, with a default value of 200 ms, is intended to give the ISP side to 'shake hands' (ie: extend TCP window) before the STinG side starts retransmission of already sent blocks. Many providers can not respond that fast, so the connection congests, using the majority of the bandwidth for retransmissions.

Raising the value to 500 ms should solve the problems for most of you, though some of you may have need of a *slightly* higher setting, since some ISP's do not use very 'straight' routing from modem pool to servers. That increases 'latency' which demands a higher DEF_RTT.

Do not raise it too high though, as that also increases the time it will take to recover after damaged packets. I advise a value less than 800 ms."

Well folks, that's about it for this time around. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - E3 Reports Galore!! New Games! New Peripherals! And more!

->From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

We've got tons of gaming news for you this week. News out of the E3 show is still hitting the streets. This, even more than Christmas time, is probably the biggest time of the year for the gaming industry and its users. Have fun reading about all of the new goodies coming our way!

Well, it's official! Hasbro Interactive announced at E3 that the Atari Jaguar is now an open system. No longer will developers have to worry about obtaining the rights to work on Jaguar games and be able to encrypt them. Let's see what this news brings to the Jaguar community.

Until next time...

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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New Games Aren't All Guts 'N' Gore

This year's E3 electronic-game industry convention was as heavy on guts and gore as ever, in spite of criticism of violence in entertainment following the Colorado high school shootings.

But between the aisles of gun-toting heroines and high-kicking ninjas on display at the Los Angeles Convention Center last week, there were some hidden gems: computer, video and online games that didn't lean on weapons of mass destruction for fun.

Convention-goers got sneak peeks at all types of new computer and video games for families and kids, from classic card games to more modern fare, including role-playing fantasy games and sports simulation networks.

Some of the most innovative non-violent games are linked to Web sites where players take on other players in real time instead of playing against a computer. In fact, according to game industry officials at the convention, it's hard to find a new computer game that doesn't come packaged with some kind of online component.

''People crave playing against other people. It's the same reason people go to chat rooms," said Ragnar Tornquist, a developer with Funcom (http://www.funcom.com), a Norwegian/Irish company that runs an international online game network.

''Two years ago, if you went online to find games, there were about a million players on the top 10 sites. Today there are well over 10 million registered players, with some crossover from site to site," said Robert Maloney, vice president of Andrea Electronics Corp. (http://www.andreaelectronics.com), which makes headsets for computer games.

At the E3 convention, Mattel (http://www.mattel.com) demonstrated a

veritable toy chest of offline and online games for kids. One was Movin' Doodles ($29.99), a new member of Mattel's American Girl Library software family, due out in fall, that lets girls create cartoons or birthday cards they can send as e-mail messages to friends.

Humongous Entertainment (http://www.humongous.com), creator of the popular Putt-Putt software series, is building a Junior Sports Network that extends the company's Junior Sports brand of sports simulation software. Come fall, kids can log on to the network and act as the coach of a baseball, soccer or football team, playing against other kids of their age or ability.

''There are very few kids' game networks out there, mainly for security reasons," said Richard Moe, project leader for the Junior Sports Network. ''We want to make sure kids can't just register with just a couple clicks. We e-mail disclosure information to the parents and they have to come back and activate the account.

''We won't even have a chat facility, but we'll compensate for that by having icon-based chat, so kids can send pre-recorded messages."

It's been 67 years since Lego (http://www.lego.com) made its first plastic brick, but the Danish company knows how to keep up with the times. One of the hottest toys last year was Mindstorms, a series of bricks with miniature computers built into them that kids use to construct robots, then program them to move around. Building on its success, this year Lego is expanding the series to include a ''Star Wars" Droid Developer Kit that lets kids build R2D2 and six other robots from the movie series and download programming instructions from the Web. The kit costs $100 and will be out in fall.

Game Web sites have come a long way from the early days when developers were counting on making money by charging players hefty monthly subscriptions. That idea never caught on. Today, most online game networks have dropped connect charges and count on advertising, sponsorships and e-commerce to make money.

One Web game genre that's done extremely well despite charging monthly subscriptions is the so-called massive multiplayer role-playing game. In these online networks, hundreds or thousands of people log on to a virtual world simultaneously, taking the part of a character they create and interacting with other characters to build towns, collect wealth and battle enemies.

Origin Systems helped popularize online role-playing games two years ago, with the introduction of ''Ultima Online" (http://www.ultimaonline.com). Since then, games such as Sony's Everquest (http://www.everquest.com) have helped spread the word. At E3, Microsoft (http://www.microsoft.com) was showing clips from a role-playing game called ''Asheron's Call" that's expected to launch in time for Christmas. Microsoft hasn't disclosed pricing, but other role-playing networks typically charge about $10 a month.

''We're expecting a huge demand and we don't think we'll be stealing from what's already out there," said Matthew Ford, the game's producer.

Broadband, or high-speed, Internet connections, through cable TV or digital subscriber line (DSL) technology, will give online game networks a giant shot in the arm, game company officials said. For high-speed access providers, games represent some of the first interactive content that takes advantage of their ability to deliver hundreds of times more digital data

per second than traditional dial-up modem connections.

Game networks already are starting to team up with broadband carriers to jointly market their services. At E3, Heat.net (http://www.heat.net), a game network owned by SegaSoft that has 1.5 million registered players, was advertising AtHome, the cable TV Internet access provider. This week, Heat.net launched a redesigned Web site with more than 100 games split into seven game channels, including one for broadband players.

‘‘We’re growing by 5,000 registered users a day. Game developers are finally realizing we have a huge audience," said Matthew Callaway, Heat.net community development manager.

989 Studios Unveils 1999 Videogame Lineup At Electronic Entertainment Expo

989 Studios, a Sony Computer Entertainment Group Company, is unveiling its 1999 videogame lineup for the PlayStation game console at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) at the Los Angeles Convention Center, May 13-15. Delivering impressive graphics and lightning-fast gameplay, 989 Studios is introducing 10 new blockbuster titles for the second half of 1999, including: NFL Xtreme 2, NFL GameDay 2000, Jet Moto 3, NCAA GameBreaker 2000, NHL FaceOff 2000, Cool Boarders 4, Twisted Metal 4, NBA ShootOut 2000, SuperCross Circuit, and NCAA Final Four 2000.

‘‘If it’s from 989 Studios it means it’s high-quality, high-performance and innovative PlayStation software," said Jeffrey Fox, vice president, marketing, 989 Studios. ‘‘Our track record of producing the industry’s most impressive lineup of hit franchise titles exemplifies the high standards in which we develop our games. We truly provide consumers with the most immersive gameplay experience possible on the PlayStation."

NFL Xtreme 2

The sequel to last year’s popular NFL Xtreme delivers even more outrageous, hard-hitting, fast action, five-on-five arcade-style football for the PlayStation. NFL Xtreme 2 features more than 500 real NFL player animations, dozens of real taunts recorded from NFL players and a stunning graphical presentation that delivers gigantic and exceptionally detailed 3D players. Scheduled ship date: July.

NFL GameDay 2000

The best-selling football videogame franchise for the PlayStation game console is back and more intense than ever. NFL GameDay 2000 features all the teams and players, world renowned sportscasters Dick Enberg and Phil Simms, motion captured animations from nine different NFL players and all-new 3D graphics. This year, NFL GameDay 2000 has more than double the amount of plays of NFL GameDay ’99 (created in conjunction with professional players and coaches) and new interactive features that capture the authenticity of the NFL. Scheduled ship date: September.

Jet Moto 3

The latest addition to the best-selling Jet Moto series, Jet Moto 3 utilizes an all-new 3D racing engine to deliver next generation racing in an immersive 3D environment. With impressive all-terrain racing tracks, Jet Moto 3 challenges gamers to complete a rigorous course while battling other

opponents for the championship title. Jet Moto 3 features realistic vehicle dynamics using advanced physics technology, challenging Artificial Intelligence (AI) and stunning game environments. Scheduled ship date: September.

NCAA GameBreaker 2000

989 Sports' college football videogame NCAA GameBreaker 2000 features play-by-play commentary from legendary announcer Keith Jackson, new game play modes and all 114 Division I-A teams and players. For the first time ever in a 989 Sports videogame, gameplayers will be able to save senior players from an NCAA GameBreaker 2000 season and download them into NFL GameDay 2000 to play with the pros. Scheduled ship date: September.

NHL FaceOff 2000

The fifth edition of the highly-touted PlayStation hockey videogame series has all the teams and players, a dramatic new TV-style presentation with two-man commentary featuring New Jersey Devils play-by-play announcer Mike Emrick and ESPN's color commentator Darren Pang, interactive crowds and enhanced Artificial Intelligence. NHL FaceOff 2000 also has more than 150 player animations in which every subtle and personalized move has been perfected to amazing detail. Scheduled ship date: October.

Cool Boarders 4

The PlayStation game console's best-selling snowboarding series, Cool Boarders, goes bigger than ever this year. Cool Boarders 4 involves numerous world famous pro snowboarders, dozens of snowboard manufacturers, countless realistic snowboarding maneuvers and fluid gameplay. The all-new advanced game engine lets gamers experience the true feeling of snowboarding by means of ultra-realistic graphics and exclusive features. Scheduled ship date: November.

Twisted Metal 4

The latest installment in the multi-million selling Twisted Metal series, Twisted Metal 4 blazes onto the vehicular combat scene with all-new demolition derby style gameplay action. Using advanced gameplay physics, Twisted Metal 4 allows players to race up ramps, land death-defying jumps, sideswipe other cars on two wheels, or roll the vehicle completely. Bizarre and twisted weapons help the gameplayers reach their goal. Scheduled ship date: November.

NBA ShootOut 2000

NBA ShootOut 2000 re-creates NBA action in lifelike detail with all the teams and players, new team-specific playbooks created by NBA players, all-new 3D player and arena graphics, advanced NBA gameplay and TV-style presentation with commentary from New Jersey Nets' broadcaster Ian Eagle. Exclusive to NBA ShootOut 2000 are features such as Touch Shooting, Touch Dribbling and the ‘‘Create A Dunk" option, which gives the gamer ultimate control and an authentic NBA feel. Scheduled ship date: November.

SuperCross Circuit

Featuring some of the industry's hottest Motorcross and Supercross racers, as well as officially licensed dirt bikes, SuperCross Circuit brings authentic Motorcross racing to the PlayStation like no other videogame before. Gamers will test their mettle while handling a 200-pound bike as

they navigate hairpin turns, bumps, straightaways and free-ride at 80 miles per hour. Scheduled ship date: November.

NCAA Final Four 2000

989 Sports' popular college basketball game returns with all-new 3D graphics, more than 300 Division I teams and playbooks designed specifically for each school. NCAA Final Four 2000 features a new state-of-the-art 3D player model that utilizes the latest ''skinning" technique to map out the exact likeness of each player. This new technology generates graphics twice as detailed as NCAA Final Fourr '99 and delivers the most realistic player model in both appearance and movement. Scheduled ship date: November.

IBM Chip To Power New Nintendo Video Game Machine

Japan's Nintendo Co. Wednesday said it has enlisted International Business Machines Corp. to make a powerful new chip for its next-generation game system in a $1 billion deal that heats up the race for dominance in the video game market.

Under the agreement, to be implemented over several years, computer giant IBM is to design and manufacture the ''Gekko," a 400-megahertz custom version of its PowerPC microprocessor.

Nintendo said its next-generation gaming console, dubbed the ''Dolphin," will hit the market in time for the 2000 holiday season and would boast the fastest and most realistic action yet in an industry where blistering speed is everything.

''It's designed to be more powerful than those found in any current or planned home video game entertainment system, providing players with dramatically better graphics and more realistic actions," the companies said.

The announcement puts Nintendo firmly back on track in the race with rivals Sony Corp. and Sega Enterprises Ltd., both of which have loudly touted the speed and performance of their upcoming machines in recent months.

For IBM, the deal is a chance to show off its latest microprocessor technology that uses smaller, copper wiring that is more efficient than traditional aluminum connections.

It marks a branching out of the PowerPC chip -- best known as the brains of Apple Computer Inc. computers -- into high-powered gaming devices.

Early reports of the deal helped propel IBM to a new record level of $228.44 Wednesday. The stock closed at $225.50, up $4.50.

The chip will be paired with a special graphics processor designed by ArtX, a Silicon Valley computer chip designer that has set the de facto standard for realistic graphics in the gaming industry.

Nintendo is expected to unveil plans for the system at a news conference Wednesday afternoon. The Dolphin will succeed the Nintendo 64 console, which is the second-most popular device behind Sony's PlayStation.

The Nintendo 64 hardware and software held a 28 percent slice of the $5 billion 1998 U.S. video game market, trailing the PlayStation's 54 percent, according to research firm PC Data.

Intent on keeping its market lead, Sony says it will launch its PlayStation II next year, powered by a custom Toshiba processor.

Third-place Sega, seeking to regain its once-lofty perch in the market, is set to beat its rivals to the punch by launching its Dreamcast machine in September, backing it with a $100 million marketing blitz.

Both Sega and Sony will feature chips capable of processing up to 128 bits of data at the same time, double the current 64-bit machines. It was unclear if Nintendo's new chip would offer 128-bit performance.

Hoping to gain a competitive edge, the companies are packing the devices with new features. Sega and Nintendo have both said their new devices will connect to the Internet and send and receive e-mail.

In an earlier announcement in Tokyo Wednesday, Nintendo and Matsushita Electric Industrial said they had struck a deal in which Matsushita, the producer of Panasonic, Technics and Quasar brands, will make digital video disc (DVD) gear for the new game machines.

Pelican Accessories Announces Launch of Acclaimed Tilt Pak and Tilt Force2 Controllers at E3 '99

Pelican Accessories, an acclaimed division of Electro Source, LLC., a leading distributor of video game software and hardware, announced the launch of its Tilt Pak for Sony PlayStation Tilt Force2 and Nintendo 64 Controller at the Electronics Entertainment Expo (E3) to be held in Los Angeles May 13-15, 1999.

Pelican Accessories' commitment to focus on product innovation that enhances gameplay brought about the development of Tilt Pak and Tilt Force2. The concept behind both products was simple; allow the body English -- specifically, the gamer's hand and arm movements -- to actually control the action in the game, resulting in a more interactive gaming experience. Utilizing the G-Force Tilt technology from Analog Devices, in conjunction with Pelican's own unique technology, the revolutionary Tilt Pak for Nintendo 64 and the Tilt Force2 controller for Playstation were successfully created.

''We are all very excited about the introduction of Tilt Pak and Tilt Force2,'' said Chris Richards, Vice President of Pelican Accessories. ''The leading edge technology of these products brings a new level of interactive reality to gameplay. The response from the national and regional retailers has been incredible and we anticipate unprecedented enthusiasm from consumers.''

Tilt Pak -- an accessory to N64 first or third party controllers, allows the controller to sense the gamers hand movements, resulting in corresponding movement of characters or vehicles on the screen without having to rely on any thumb or finger controls. Tilt right and your racecar veers right, tilt forward too fast and your fighter jet slams into the flight deck. Enhanced rumble and motion-sensing technology improves interactive game play, providing maximum game control and performance.

Tilt Force2 Controller -- senses the movements of the control pad and translates it into precise gaming action. Tilt right and your screen character or vehicle moves right, tilt forward and your character or vehicle moves forward or down. Implementing this revolutionary technology into a stylish dual analog/force feedback control pad, the Tilt Force2 is a unique controller that combines advanced rumble and motion-sensing technology that enhances interactive gameplay for any racing, flight, adventure, RPG or sports title for PlayStation.

G-Force Tilt is a revolutionary micromachined accelerometer from Analog Devices that enables state-of-the-art precision and accuracy in game control. G-Force Tilt is based on a microscopic mass spring system used to measure acceleration and uses gravity as an input signal. The technology enables game controllers to sense body motion in all directions and relay those movements on screen, in real-time to enhance the game experience.

With the release of these two leading edge products Pelican Accessories will solidify its position as one of the leading players in the competitive video game accessories business. Pelican Accessories offers a full line of quality video gaming accessories for all the major video game platforms.

Tilt Pak and Tilt Force2 will be represented by all major retailers that carry video game accessories. Tilt Pak will be in stores May 21st with a target street price of $29.99. Tilt Force2 will be in stores May 30th with a target street price of $29.99.

Information can also be found via Internet at http://www.pelicanacc.com

Hasbro Interactive Scores NFL Football License for New Line of Em@il Games

Hasbro Interactive announced a new licensing agreement with the NationalFootball League to create an NFL Em@il Game based on America’s favorite sport. The game is one of several new offerings by Hasbro Interactive to extend its new e-mail game platform.

For game play, players compete online with the convenience of e-mail. Hasbro Interactive’s NFL Football Em@il Game will give players the opportunity to set their starting and bench line-ups, form game plans, determine formations and choose from hundreds of offensive and defensive plays with their favorite AFC or NFC team. All games are designed as fully rendered, four-color game boards that are e-mailed to the second player as an attachment less than 5KB in size.

‘‘We’re thrilled to be able to partner with the NFL on this exciting new breakthrough in computer entertainment," said Tom Dusenberry, president of Hasbro Interactive. ‘‘Communicating via e-mail is the most popular activity for people who use a PC and the NFL Football Em@il Game will bring people together to celebrate the competitive spirit of their favorite sport."

‘‘NFL fans are already online in large numbers," said Gene Goldberg, vice president/consumer products for NFL Properties, Inc. ‘‘Hasbro Interactive’s new Em@il games will give football fans of all ages a fun, new way to ‘play football’ against their friends and families."

Earlier this year, Hasbro Interactive launched this new way to have fun on the personal computer by using e-mail as a game platform--putting

entertainment into e-mail! Following the successful launch of their first three Em@il Game titles, Scrabbler, Battleshipr, and Grandmaster Chess Em@il Games, the company plans to introduce several more games this year, including the NFL Football title as well as e-mail versions of Cluer, Riskr, and X-Comr. Clue and Risk feature the original game play of their board game counterparts; X-Com is based on MicroProse's original X-Com Apocalypse CD-ROM hit.

How does it work?

Hasbro Interactive's Em@il Games are as simple as sending regular e-mail messages. All it takes is an Em@il Game disk, a Windows-based e-mail account and a CD-ROM drive for the host player. Games are simple to open and play: Player One starts the game and makes the first move. After following prompts to enter both players' e-mail addresses, the game is sent to Player Two as an e-mail attachment. Player One's move is displayed on a colorful screen when Player Two opens the e-mail attachment. Then Player Two makes a move and sends it back. There's even a message feature so players can communicate with each other as they play.

The program allows the participant who has the disk to simultaneously host multiple games with different e-mail recipients. Only one player has to have the disk, opponents are automatically enabled as second players through the first e-mail move.

Hasbro Interactive's new line of Em@il Games is in stores now. NFL Football Em@il Game will ship in July and the rest of the new games will ship in the fall. The games will be available for Windows 95/98 at a suggested retail price of $14.95 per title.

Hasbro began its relationship with the NFL in 1988 after the two leaders entered a full-scale licensing agreement. In that time Hasbro has launched an expanded line-up of its Starting Line-up figurines, a host of NFL Nerf products, NFL Trivial Pursuit and NFL Monopoly. New products, including the NFL Em@il game are being developed for the 1999 NFL season.

An Internet connection (TCP/IP); Windows 95/98-based e-mail account that uses file attachments is required by both players for play. Not compatible with some older email systems. Security systems may prevent you for playing this product over some corporate networks.

Nintendo, Matsushita To Team Up

Japan's Nintendo Co. and electronics giant Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. will develop the next version of the Nintendo game console as part of a broad partnership, the companies said today.

The partnership is the second in recent months pairing a game maker and a major electronics company.

Under the alliance, Matsushita will provide digital video disc drives for the new Nintendo game machine, which will go on sale worldwide at the end of 2000.

The new game machine will be powered by an IBM PowerPC processor, the companies said.

Sony and Toshiba Corp. announced in March that they will jointly manufacture the next generation of the PlayStation.

Putting games on digital video discs will be a big change for Nintendo, which has used specialized cartridges in previous versions of its game players. Sony's decision to use compact discs instead of cartridges was seen as a major reason for the popularity of its PlayStation.

Both CDs and DVDs are less expensive to manufacture than cartridges, making the formats popular with game developers.

Matsushita and Nintendo also said they will collaborate on other home electronics products -- possibly including a machine that could be used both to play games and view movies.

Multi-Platform Gaming Leader 3DO Announces Electronic Entertainment Expo Line-Up

The 3DO Company announced its line-up of games that will be showcased at the 1999 Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles. The 3DO Company will preview new titles and for PC, PlayStation and Nintendo 64 game consoles. Featured titles include the newest members of the Army Men battalion; ''BattleTanx II," the sequel to the popular tank action game; ''High Heat Baseball 2000," widely hailed as the best baseball game around; and ''Crusaders of Might and Magic," a brand new 3D action/fantasy thriller that brings the world of Might and Magic to console systems.

Army Men -- Air Attack -- PlayStation and PC

The immensely popular Army Men series is now launching into the great blue yonder as helicopters take center stage in the Army Men -- Air Attack game. An all-new plastic hero, the brash young ''Captain," and his Alpha Wolf Squadron, take up the Green Army's cause from the air: rescuing POWs, destroying menacing anthills, and sabotaging the Tan Army's nefarious plans.

Army Men -- Sarge's Heroes -- PlayStation and Nintendo 64

On the N64, the Army Men -- Sarge's Heroes game will feature state-of-the-art technological features including single-skinned, texture mapped models with specular highlighting and articulated character animations with quaternion-based interpolation. The CD-ROM format of the PlayStation game console will allow for stunning cinematics and professional voice acting that enrich the story of Sarge and his courageous company of scrappy plastic misfits. The Army Men -- Sarge's Heroes game is expected to ship this fall in time for the holiday gift-buying season. It's Real Combat. Plastic Men.

Army Men III -- PC

The Army Men III game brings back the popular Green Army leader, Sarge, and his Bravo Company to do battle with the evil Tan Army. In the ongoing battle between the Green and Tan, the diabolical Plastro, commander of the Tan Army, has enlisted the aid of a depraved race of plastic bug-eyed aliens. To combat new menace, Sarge teams up with the lovely and heroic leader of the Space Troopers to save toykind as we know it. New toys with

powerful capabilities and greater control for the player make this the most exciting Army Men episode for the PC yet.

BattleTanx II -- Nintendo 64

Set in a post-apocalyptic urban wasteland, one young boy with telekinetic powers holds the key to future humanity. Standing in the way of a new Utopia is the evil QueenLord and her wicked plans to use the boy's powers to dominate the world. In this sequel to the popular BattleTanx, players experience ''kill or be killed" battle tank action combined with the tactical elements of Capture the Flag on both domestic and foreign soil. Featuring seven different modes of play, multiple camera perspectives, fully destructible environments and enhanced rendering, BattleTanx II is pulse pounding combat at its finest.

Crusaders of Might and Magic -- PC, PlayStation and Nintendo 64

Crusaders of Might and Magic is a brand new 3D Action-Fantasy thriller that challenges players in the tradition of the best-selling Might and Magic series. This is a game of spell-binding and addictive entertainment where the player is capable of heroic exploits as he travels through an incredible world of ever challenging puzzles, daunting quests, gruesome monsters, and fierce combat.

Family Game Pack 2 -- PC

The only collection of classic games to bring card games, board games, solitaire games and casino games together in one package, Family Game Pack 2 is the sixth title in the successful Family Games series from 3DO. From Old Maid to chess, and from solitaire play to round-robin tournament action -- there's something in this collection for every member of the family. Multiplayer support ensures hours and hours of competitive play.

Gulf War: Operation Desert Hammer -- PC

Go back and finish it, once and for all. A pure adrenaline-pumping action game, Gulf War puts players in the drivers seat of the M12 tank-nicknamed ''The Hammer" -- to rid the world of an insane dictator. With a story inspired by today's headlines, the game offers real-world locations and missions with ease-of-use, arcade-style, single and multiplayer gameplay at an accessible price.

High Heat Baseball 2000 -- PC and PlayStation

The best baseball game around is all new for PC this year, and comes to PlayStation for the first time. A fast-paced, leading-edge baseball game featuring 16-bit color, high-resolution graphics, and highly detailed 3D stadium environments and high quality 3D player animations derived from motion capture. The perfect balance between action and realism is accentuated through the unique pitcher-batter confrontation, superior artificial intelligence, and speedy pace of play unlike any other baseball game on the market today.

Might and Magic VII For Blood and Honor -- PC

The best-selling, award-winning role playing series is back, and its bigger and better than ever. Might and Magic VII enhances the technological leaps made in Might and Magic VI, and adds a variety of new gameplay elements. Players can choose whether to play in real-time or in an improved turn-based combat mode (with movement during the combat phase). Engage in

hundreds of entertaining mini-quests that branch off from the main saga while enjoying the decisions of innovative multi-dimensional quests. Experience breathtaking 16-bit, 65,000 color graphics in a smooth-scrolling, high-resolution environment using either software only or 3D acceleration cards.

Vegas Games 2000 -- PlayStation

The most games available in one package for the PlayStation, Games 2000 features high-resolution graphics, familiar games, a simple interface and multiplayer capabilities. Games include four versions of Blackjack, Keno, 5-card stud, Baccarat, five different Slots, Roulette, 5-card draw, Texas Hold-em, Craps and five versions of Video Poker. Vegas Games goes the extra mile to create a top-notch gaming environment; this is no shareware compilation.

Sega Announces Unprecedented Line-Up of First-Party Games for Sega Dreamcast Launch

Sega of America announced an incomparable line-up of first-party games for Sega Dreamcast -- ‘‘the ultimate gaming machine."

Encompassing the sports, action, arcade, fighting and adventure genres, these first-party Sega Dreamcast titles take full advantage of the system’s unparalleled technology resulting in videogames that are so advanced, realistic and ‘‘alive," they are setting the new standard in console gaming. Sega Dreamcast first-party games combine the creative genius of Sega’s renowned development teams with well-known Sega properties and characters that gamers love.

This year’s line-up of eagerly-awaited first-party titles include ‘‘Sonic Adventure," ‘‘Virtua Fighter 3" ‘‘NFL 2000" (working title), ‘‘NBA 2000," (working title), ‘‘NHL Hockey" (working title), ‘‘CART Racing ," ‘‘The House of The Dead 2," ‘‘Sega Rally 2," ‘‘Sega Bass Fishing" and the highly anticipated, ‘‘Shenmue."

Sega Dreamcast’s advanced hardware technology is allowing Sega’s game developers to do things never before possible on a console or the personal computer. Sega Dreamcast videogames feel ‘‘alive," -- 3D worlds are expansive and change in real-time, players can race at a blazing 60 frames per second, artificial intelligence (AI) can learn your playing tendencies and habits in order to beat you. In Sega’s NFL game, when a quarterback gets brave and decides to run down the middle of the field, the strong safety can challenge the quarterback with a wind-sucking tackle from the front. In the collision, the quarterback will actually be thrown backward, just like in real football. The gameplay is so real, the quarterback may be side-lined for the rest of the game with an injury. This is true-to-life excitement.

‘‘Sega’s commitment to developing entertaining and ‘alive’ first-party games for consumers will allow us to take market share from Sony and Nintendo," said Bernard Stolar, president and chief operating officer of Sega of America. ‘‘Today’s consumer wants the next-generation of realistic videogame graphics and gameplay. Sega’s development teams are delivering the most technologically advanced and real first-party games ever seen, only for Sega Dreamcast."

Sega Dreamcast first party titles include:

-- Sonic Adventure - Sega's world-renowned Sonic the Hedgehog will be making his debut on Sega Dreamcast in Sonic Adventure - an action/adventure title setting loose the famous blue character in an all-new full 3D thrill ride. Ship: October 1999.

-- Virtua Fighter 3 - The latest in the acclaimed Virtua Fighter series, incredible 3D gaming environments and characters, fluid gameplay and lifelike graphics. Ship: September 1999.

-- NFL 2000 (working title) - From bone-crushing tackles to strategic offensive maneuvers, NFL 2000 is the most realistic football game ever made featuring an intricate 3D collision model that ensures players don't just fall over when hit - they respond to the direction and force of the tackle. Ship: September 1999.

-- NBA 2000 (working title) - The next true-to-life basketball game created. Use true playbooks designed by actual NBA coaches. Players created using more than 1,600 motion-captured moves, four times that of the competition, for silky smooth lifelike movement. Ship: September 1999.

-- NHL Hockey (working title) - The most realistic hockey game ever made, NHL Hockey features 1,300 motion-captured moves and 3D crowds that react to gameplay. See the movement in players jerseys as they skate and hit, witness coaches argue calls against their teams and celebrate team goals. This is hockey at its finest. Ship: January 2000.

-- The House of The Dead 2 - A new evil inventor has picked up where the mad scientist Dr. Curian left off in The House of the Dead - creating zombies striving to put an end to mankind. Get ready to fight the undead as two rookie AMS agents in this action-packed adventure. Ship: September 1999.

-- Sega Rally 2 - A true high-speed, off-road racing thrill ride, Sega Rally 2 brings realistic arcade-style racing to the home, with treacherous tracks, kick-butt cars, and 3D graphics so realistic, you'll need wipers to keep the dirt off your TV screen! Ship: TBD.

-- CART Racing - The first-ever console racing title that replicates the intense competition and challenging tracks of CART racing. True-to-life high octane driving action. Ship: September 1999.

-- Sega Bass Fishing - The hit game that got players hooked in the arcades is now coming to Sega Dreamcast. This arcade-perfect translation is compatible with a unique fishing controller with force feedback, making gameplay even more realistic. Ship: Fall 1999.

-- Shenmue - The most highly anticipated game for Sega Dreamcast, Shenmue is a groundbreaking adventure/role-playing game that recreates the world in the context of a living digital experience. The game features thousands of areas to explore in Japan and China, 500 characters to interact with and real-time changing environments never seen before in a videogame. Ship: TBD.

Midway Prepares To Kick off NFL Blitz 2000

Midway Developing NFL Blitz 2000 for the Nintendo 64, PlayStation game console, Sega Dreamcast, Game Boy Color and PC

With no refs, no rules, and no mercy, NFL Blitz continues to stun the competition as Midway heads back to the locker room for the development of the mega hit’s sequel. Midway Home Entertainment Inc., one of the industry’s leading video game developers, announced that NFL Blitz 2000 is expected to hurdle out of training camp and tackle the PlayStation game console, Nintendo 64, Sega Dreamcast, Game Boy Color and PC this fall. NFL Blitz 2000 will be backed by an extensive television advertising campaign.

‘‘The huge success of the NFL Blitz’s rookie campaign once again broke the mold and expanded the sports category," said Paula Cook, director of marketing at Midway Home Entertainment. ‘‘Midway owns the over-the-top arcade style sports market and the development team will ensure that NFL Blitz 2000 will again be the most fun football game on the market."

Based on the arcade hit, the highly successful NFL Blitz was released last year for the PlayStation game console, Nintendo 64, Game Boy Color and PC. The critical raves were widespread with a Time columnist hailing the game as his favorite football game and Sports Illustrated stating that ‘‘NFL Blitz is simply the most fun game on the market." Electric Playground added that ‘‘Midway’s astonishingly addictive NFL Blitz is possibly the most fun and addictive game ever developed," while the Miami Herald exclaimed, ‘‘NFL Blitz sets the standard for football video games!"

An officially licensed product of the NFL and PLAYERS INC, NFL Blitz 2000 features all 31 teams, each comprised of seven of the best offensive and defensive players from each team. With graphically detailed tackle animations and killer artificial intelligence, NFL Blitz 2000 sets the standard for football video games.

When NFL Blitz 2000 emerges from the development tunnel it will contain a host of new features. All four platforms will include an offensive and defensive play editor. After drawing up new plays, gamers can instantly check out their X’s and O’s in action by utilizing the game’s instant preview feature. Players can also expect NFL Blitz 2000 to include team play books, four-player action, ‘‘on-fire" mode, updated 1999 rosters, fantasy stadiums, intelligent play select artificial intelligence, improved weather effects, new codes, camera angels and secret players.

Midway is "Ready 2 Rumble" At E3 With Its Knock-Out Product Lineup

Midway Home Entertainment Inc., one of the industry’s leading video game publishers, is ‘‘Ready 2 Rumble" at this year’s Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) as it showcases its knock-out lineup of games for the PlayStation game console, Nintendo 64, Sega Dreamcast and Game Boy Color platforms. Michael Buffer, world-renowned boxing announcer, was on hand Friday, May 14 for an exciting lineup of ringside mayhem. Festivities included a sound-alike contest, Ready 2 Rumble head-to-head

tournament, autograph signing and photo opportunities.

The Midway booth hosted a motion simulator ride that took attendees on a wild aquatic ride through an exciting level of Midway’s upcoming game Hydro Thunder. Attendees were also able to compete for prizes in Midway’s free throw shooting contests on the booth’s mini basketball court and football passing competitions that challenge players to complete passes to ‘‘on-screen" receivers.

Midway was showcasing software titles including Mortal Kombat Special Forces, Gauntlet Legends, World Driver: Championship, NBA ShowTime: NBA on NBC, Jackie Chan’s Stuntmaster and Paperboy. Midway was also displaying titles including Ready 2 Rumble Boxing, NFL Blitz 2000, Mortal Kombat Gold and Hydro Thunder at launch for the Sega Dreamcast system. Special Cybercasts live from the show floor are available to the public on Midway’s Web site at www.midway.com as well as information about all of Midway’s games.

‘‘Midway is showcasing its most astonishing lineup ever at this year’s E3," said Byron Cook, president of Midway Home Entertainment. ‘‘We will deliver the fun and exciting games that our fans have come to love and expect."

MIDWAY’S E3 1999 LINEUP FEATURES:

NFL Blitz 2000 - With ‘‘No Ref, No Rules and No Mercy" this officially licensed NFL and PLAYERS INC product, is more than a game - it’s an NFL highlight film. Based on the arcade hit, NFL Blitz 2000 features helmet-jarring tackles, spectacular catches, custom play books and multi-player action for up to four players. NFL Blitz 2000 breaks training camp and tackles the Sega Dreamcast, Nintendo 64, PlayStation game console, Game Boy Color and PC this fall.

Mortal Kombat Gold - As a true arcade port, Mortal Kombat Gold provides gamers with an action-packed fighting game with superior 3-D graphics. Each character will feature 3,000 polygons, while the game preserves the coin-op version’s scorching speed of 60 frames per second. All these factors combine to give players an extremely detailed and realistic translation from the arcade to the Dreamcast system. Mortal Kombat Gold was designed exclusively for the Sega Dreamcast and is expected to be available at launch of the system this fall.

Mortal Kombat Special Forces - Adding to the fighting core of MK4, Mortal Kombat Special Forces combines role-playing and puzzle solving elements with the intense fighting action that fans have come to expect from the Mortal Kombat franchise. Playing as either Jax or Sonya, gamers are challenged by seven immersive, 3-D worlds. Each world features multiple action packed levels and depending on which character players select and how events unfold during that level, the story’s path can change dramatically. This provides hours of fierce gameplay and extensive replay value. Mortal Kombat Special Forces is expected to fight its way onto Nintendo 64 and PlayStation game console this fall.

World Driver: Championship - This high-speed, realistic racer will challenge both hardcore racing fans and novice racers alike. Players are given one of the most realistic, up-close and personal view of the real world of race car driving ever offered for the Nintendo 64. World Driver: Championship’s stunning graphic effects boast real-time lighting and reflection mapping and the game features over 30 exotic cars to choose from and 10 dazzling tracks from all over the world. World Driver: Championship

is expected to peel out of the starting gate this June exclusively for the Nintendo 64.

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing - Featuring Michael Buffer’s ‘‘Lets Get Ready to Rumble," Ready 2 Rumble Boxing gives players the opportunity to compete as one of 20 boxers, each with their own fighting style. Each boxer is hyper realistic with an unlimited number of punch combinations for both realistic and over-the-top boxing styles. Players can compete in arcade-style mode, contend for a championship belt or play head-to-head on the system. One of the most anticipated games of E3, Ready 2 Rumble Boxing is expected to be available in conjunction with the launch of the Sega Dreamcast system this fall, as well as the PlayStation game console, Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Color.

Hydro Thunder - Collecting mega quarters in the arcades now, gamers enter this frenetically paced water adventure as members of the Hydro Thunder Racing Association (H.T.R.A.). Players join this secret organization of adventurous racing renegades in their quest to race through eleven unique and visually stunning aquatic tracks. Each track is loaded with secret paths, ramps, hidden power ups, special boat moves and a variety of other discovery challenges. Along the way racers encounter challenging water conditions including rolling waves, stormy swells, glassy lakes, waterfalls and flowing fumes. The 3-D, adrenaline-pumping boat racing game will be available at retail for the Sega Dreamcast this fall and will make its way on to the Nintendo 64 and PlayStation game console this spring. This title is not officially approved by the SCEA.

NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC - Midway’s latest coin-op hit, NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC offers gorgeous, motion captured crossover dribble moves, no-look passes, rim-rocking dunks, hidden characters, over 120 brilliantly detailed NBA stars and the look and feel of an actual NBC broadcast. NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC promises to be the season’s hottest basketball title. The high-flying title will feature all 29 NBA teams. Hoop junkies will also be able to customize their teams with real or created players. The officially licensed NBA and NBC product is expected to thunder onto the Sega Dreamcast, Nintendo 64, PlayStation game console, Game Boy Color and PC this fall.

Gauntlet Legends - The new, 3-D video game based on the time-honored arcade classic Gauntlet. One to four players choose from eight unique character personas to fight through intricately crafted 3-D worlds and defeat the evil Skorne. Using force of arms and exotic magical powers, players vanquish swarms of hideous creatures, search for treasure, evade traps, and solve quests. This updated Gauntlet Legends shines with lavish visuals and dynamic effects for each magical spell. Special character-based power attacks, thrown magic ‘grenades’ and stunning new power-ups add to the well-schooled mayhem. The revolutionary game save system allows players to transfer evolving characters from their own machine to a friend’s so they can take on the dungeon together. A complete, non-linear story line with exclusive new levels to the home versions make this the most unique multi-player action product ever. Gauntlet Legends is the follow up to the original coin-op classic and is scheduled to ship to retail this fall for the Nintendo 64 and PlayStation game console.

Paperboy - Based on the smash coin-op hit from the 80’s, Paperboy insures gamers’ newspaper-tossing skills will be tested by over 45 levels, like Alice’s RV Haven and Raybob’s Junkyard, which feature secret areas and hidden tracks. Along the way a ton of obstacles including cacti, cows, skunks and pelicans, will impede players’ progress. As digital paperboys and papergirls struggle to stay on their bikes, they can attempt to pull

off a variety of aerial stunts that will improve their score. By successfully completing routes, gamers can earn money to put towards upgrading their bikes and purchasing power-ups. Paperboy is in development for the Nintendo 64 and PlayStationr game console and will be available this fall. Game Boy Color ships later this month.

Jackie Chan’s Stuntmaster - A combination of Jackie Chan’s fighting style and the physical comedy of his film persona merge together to form a classic action video game in real-time 3-D complete with motion capture of Jackie Chan, wise-cracking voice samples and fully interactive environments. Jackie Chan’s Stuntmaster allows players to control Jackie as he fights to retrieve his stolen goods from the evil Dante and his minions. Throughout the game, Jackie performs remarkable stunts, displays his acrobatic skills and uses dynamic background elements to get him out of trouble. Jackie Chan’s Stuntmaster is fighting its way onto PlayStation game console this fall.

Fox’s CROC Rocks in CROC 2 Set for Release On the PC and GameBoy Color

Fox Interactive’s most successful original franchise, CROC, leaps to the next level with CROC 2 now set for release on the PC and GameBoy Color in addition to the announced PlayStation version slated to ship next month. The PC and GameBoy Color titles will be released in Q4 1999 and will benefit from the multi-faceted marketing blitz scheduled to support the release of CROC 2 PlayStation . Fox Interactive’s critically acclaimed hit, CROC: Legend of the Gobbos, which kicked off the franchise in September 1997, has tallied sales of more than two million units worldwide.

‘‘CROC continues to be a tremendous success," said Jon Richmond, president, Fox Interactive. ‘‘Making it available on the PC and GameBoy Color broadens its mass appeal of the game. For example, young kids can now enjoy CROC 2 on their portable GameBoy Color when they take a family vacation or go away to summer camp."

The launch of CROC 2 will be supported by a multi-level marketing effort highlighted by a major partnership with Nabisco LifeSavers Company in the national ‘‘CROC 2 Down Under" Promotion. The game will be showcased on more than 6.5 million packages of LifeSavers Gummi Savers’ candy packages, integration of the Gummi Savers product into the game and a sweepstakes with a grand prize trip for a family-of-four to Australia, the birthplace of CROC. The promotion will run through the end of 1999.

Expanding on the original story line of CROC, our friendly green crocodile sets off in CROC 2 to search for his long lost parents. Traveling to Gobbos Island to find his parents, CROC discovers Baron Dante has kidnapped all the Gobbo kings. While on his mission to save the Gobbo kings by uncovering clues and secrets, CROC strives to rescue the Gobbos and find his parents.

Some of the game’s features include:

-- Four unique and colorful new Gobbo tribes plus a Secret Village

-- Expansive tribe villages with more than 40 levels of game play

-- Ability to actually communicate to Gobbos in the game

-- Added moves for CROC such as boost triple jump, power flip,

hanging, Croccy paddle and rope swing

-- Exciting new adventures as CROC races into action in a go-cart, hang glider, speedboat, mine cart and a hot air balloon

-- Ability to pick up and throw objects to discover hidden clues

-- CROC hurries along pathways and scurries below them

-- Trade crystals to get extra power-ups and bonus items like Gummi jumps

-- Go head-to-head with seven all-new bosses such as Cannon Boat Keith the Pirate and Soveena the Squid who secretly has a crush on CROC!

Fox Interactive Kicks Off E3 With Hot New Titles: DIE HARD TRILOGY 2 and PLANET OF THE APES, Both for the Playstation and PC

n-Space and Visiware Studios Developing New Games From Hot Fox Properties

Continuing its momentum as a multi-platform publisher, Fox Interactive unveiled its plans today for new titles based on two of Twentieth Century Fox's hottest franchises.

DIE HARD TRILOGY 2 and PLANET OF THE APES are now in active development for release in 1999 and early 2000 respectively. DIE HARD TRILOGY 2, developed by n-Space, is a follow-up to one of Fox Interactive's most successful games, the multi-million selling DIE HARD TRILOGY. PLANET OF THE APES, developed by Visiware Studios, will thrill fans with an all-new cutting-edge gaming experience. Both titles will be available on the PlayStation and Windows PC platforms.

''The phenomenal success of DIE HARD TRILOGY has created a stand-alone video game franchise which has taken on its own life beyond the underlying entertainment property," said Jon Richmond, president of Fox Interactive. ''The highly anticipated DIE HARD TRILOGY 2 game is strong evidence of this, and we aim to build an equally strong hit video game franchise with PLANET OF THE APES."

Following up on one of Fox Interactive's most successful titles to date, DIE HARD TRILOGY 2 features an all-new story line that packs three unique action-filled games into one. The bright lights and vast landscape of Las Vegas provide the backdrop for our hero John McClane, who once again finds himself with the chips stacked against him, facing a new legion of hi-tech terrorists in a race against time. While in town visiting his old friend Kenny Sinclair, McClane stumbles across a diabolical plot masterminded by a multi-national group of terrorists, capable of wiping Vegas off the map. Developed by n-Space, developers of ''Duke Nukem: Time to Kill" and ''Rugrats" for the PlayStation, DIE HARD TRILOGY 2 will be available in the fall of 1999 on PlayStation and PC.

Based on one of the most recognizable franchises in movie history and the ground breaking book by Pierre Boulle, PLANET OF THE APES is set to become one of the most involved and critically acclaimed action adventure games to date. Playing as Ulysses, sole human survivor, the gamer crash lands a spaceship on an uncharted planet 1,000 years into the future. Players soon

discover evolution has taken a cruel twist where Apes rule, and human beings are at the bottom of the food chain.

In a bid for survival, gamers will progress through this huge action adventure game and unravel the mystery of the complex story line. Using a unique real-time cinematic style camera, players will explore 15 immense levels with a total of more than 70 distinct sub-levels. Some of the game's other features include solving intelligent puzzles, fighting various foes such as giant bats, mutated rats and rabid Hyenas, using stealth capabilities to sneak past and trick apes, or blasting out of sticky situations in times of crisis. With over 2,000 lines of dialog, gamers will converse with a multitude of different characters to stay alive and advance in the game. Blending over 1,000 amazingly realistic motion-captured character animations, puzzles, action or stealth-based game play and an involving plot, PLANET OF THE APES is going to set new standards for action adventure games on the PlayStation and PC platforms when it is schedule be released in the Spring of 2000.

Midway Supports Sega Dreamcast Console with HydroThunder Boat Racing

Ultra-Realistic Coin-Op Smash Prepares to Dive onto Home Consoles

Midway Home Entertainment Inc., one of the industry's leading video game publishers, today announced the development of Hydro Thunder for Sega Dreamcast. The 3-D adrenaline-pumping boat racing game will be at retail exclusively for Sega Dreamcast this fall. It makes its way on to the Nintendor 64 and PlayStationr game console later next year.

''The coin-op version of Hydro Thunder already has players dropping quarters to experience the game's vibrant graphics and gut-wrenching, fast paced gameplay," said Paula Cook, director of marketing at Midway Home Entertainment. ''Midway is well-established as a leader in the racing genre. With Hydro Thunder, we have taken to the water to provide gamers with a unique racing experience."

Gamers enter this frenetically paced water adventure as members of the Hydro Thunder Racing Association (H.T.R.A.). Players join this secret organization of adventurous racing renegades in their quest to race through eleven unique and visually stunning aquatic tracks. Each track is loaded with secret paths, ramps, hidden power-ups, special boat moves and a variety of other discovery challenges. Along the way, racers encounter challenging water conditions including rolling waves, stormy swells, glassy lakes, waterfalls and flowing fumes.

In Hydro Thunder, real Newtonian physics are used to emulate the unique feel of high speed racing boats. As a result, gamers can feel their stomachs churn as their boats react to vicious 3-D waves and wild terrain with a realism unmatched by any other home console game on the market.

H.T.R.A members can select from a total of 13 high-performance boats. The vehicles range from V-hulls to high-concept prototypes and each offer distinct handling characteristics.

Midway Creates New Genre with Mortal Kombat Special Forces

Midway Home Entertainment Inc., one of the industry's leading video game developers, announced that Mortal Kombat Special Forces, the latest installment to the Mortal Kombat universe is in development. Mortal Kombat Special Forces is expected to fight its way onto Nintendo 64 and PlayStation game console this fall and adds a new action adventure element to Midway's most renown franchise.

''Mortal Kombat fans will learn the story behind the Mortal Kombat series in Mortal Kombat Special Forces,'' said Paula Cook, director of marketing for Midway Home Entertainment. ''As gamers fight their way through this Mortal Kombat prequel, the story of Jax and Sonya unfolds.''

Adding to the fighting core of MK4, Mortal Kombat Special Forces combines role-playing and puzzle solving elements with the intense fighting action that fans have come to expect from the Mortal Kombat franchise. Playing as either Jax or Sonya, gamers are challenged by 7 immersive, 3-D worlds. Each world features multiple action packed levels and depending on which character players select and how events unfold during that level, the story's path can change dramatically. This provides hours of fierce gameplay and extensive replay value. Along with the new gameplay and storyline, Midway has equipped gamers with new special moves, an assortment of power-ups, a variety of weapons, to help them through their mission. Motion capture assures the characters the smoothest and most realistic movement while various camera views lends to the exploration element of the game.

Midway Set to Deliver Paperboy

Coin-Op Classic on Route for Fall Release on Nintendo 64 and PlayStation Game Console

Strap your bag to the handlebars and prepare to hit the pavement. Midway Home Entertainment, one of the industry's leading video game publishers, has announced that the coin-op favorite, Paperboy, is in development for the Nintendo 64 and PlayStation game console and will be available this fall. Game Boy Color ships later this month.

''Nostalgic gamers have been clamoring for a new version of Paperboy," said Paula Cook, director of marketing for Midway Home Entertainment. ''We are in a unique position to capitalize on the longevity of our classic titles. Gamers are thrilled when we go back into our classics library and redesign titles for play on the home consoles."

In Paperboy, good old Mr. Daily needs help. Mr. Daily is the owner of the Daily Sun, the oldest and most respected paper in town. Unfortunately, in the last few years an unscrupulous competitor has moved in, and by stealing subscribers, has threatened to put the Sun out of business. Only Paperboy, whose bike riding and newspaper tossing skills are unmatched, can save the day. By increasing the subscription rate to 75% across the all-American community of Centreville, the Daily Sun will once again be the town's number one source of news.

Gamers newspaper-tossing skills will be tested by over 45 levels, like Alice's RV Haven and Raybob's Junkyard, which feature secret areas and hidden tracks. Along the way, a ton of obstacles, including cacti, cows, skunks and pelicans, will impede players' progress. As digital paperboys

and papergirls struggle to stay on their bikes, they can attempt to pull off a variety of aerial stunts that will improve their score. By successfully completing routes, gamers can earn money to put towards upgrading their bikes and purchasing power-ups.

Sega Announces Three New Third Party Publishers

16 Major US Third Parties Pledge Support for Sega Dreamcast

Sega of America announced three new third party developers currently creating new games for Sega Dreamcast -- ‘‘the ultimate gaming machine" -- bringing the total of major third party developers supporting Sega Dreamcast in the United States to 16.

These companies include ASC Games, Fox Interactive, and Ubi Soft Entertainment. These ‘‘best of breed" developers are focusing their creative efforts on harnessing the power of the Sega Dreamcast to create unprecedented realism, graphics and gameplay in their Sega Dreamcast titles.

The publishers announced today will join the ranks of other acclaimed third party partners who are behind Sega Dreamcast including Acclaim, Accolade, Capcom, Take 2, THQ, Hasbro Interactive, Mindscape, Namco, Midway, GT Interactive, Interplay, Konami and Micropose. Currently, there are more than 100 developers around the world creating games for Sega Dreamcast. With the help of developers and publishers worldwide, Sega of America expects to ship Sega Dreamcast on 9-9-99 with 16 games, to have 30 games by the holidays and to have a software library for Sega Dreamcast of more than 100 by the end of the year 2000.

Sega Dreamcast’s advanced technology opens new doors to developers who will no longer have to compromise their creations based on the limitations of the platform they are developing for. Sega Dreamcast’s 26mgs of RAM allows developers to create all the graphics, audio and gameplay they want, without having to sacrifice their vision. Sega Dreamcast supports a proprietary GD-ROM technology, which allows for more than two times the storage capacity (1 gigabyte) of the CD-ROM format. Because of this, developers no longer have to work around the memory limits they faced in the past. The result is better games for the consumer. Already, third party software currently in development is pushing the envelope in terms of graphics, sound and gameplay.

‘‘Third-Party developers have been Sega’s number one priority with Sega Dreamcast," said Neal Robison, group director of third party licensing of Sega of America. ‘‘Using what is known as the ‘360 Degree Development Program,’ Sega is able to provide support for developers on every level, every step of the way, 24 hours a day to help them to create the best games possible."

Through Sega Dreamcast’s ‘‘360 Degree Development Program," third-party developers will be able to grow with the system, using enhanced, constantly updated software tools, comprehensive documentation in print and online formats, developer boot camps and exclusive one-on-one training sessions. Sega is constantly in contact with developers to ensure the highest quality technical support is provided throughout the development process.

Sega Dreamcast is the most-advanced video game system ever developed.

Sega’s goal when creating Sega Dreamcast was to design a machine comprised of components optimized specifically for video gaming. To do that, Sega partnered its own proprietary gaming technologies with industry leaders such as Microsoft, NEC, Hitachi, and Yamaha.

Sega Dreamcast’s 200 MHz Hitachi SH-4 CPU is the most powerful 3D processor ever developed for a console video game system. The NEC PowerVR DC chip set is capable of rendering more than three million polygons per second. It enables game designers to use such advanced graphics features as texture mapping, Gouraud shading, z-buffering, light sourcing and anti-aliasing. The Yamaha Audio Engine found in Sega Dreamcast is a dedicated AICA chip set, featuring a powerful 32-bit ARM 7 RISC CPU and a Digital Sound Processor capable of producing 64 channels of dynamic sound and full 3D audio support. Sega Dreamcast features 26 total megabytes of RAM and a modem with a data transfer rate of 56K bytes per second, which will also be upgradable.

With Sega Dreamcast, the only limit is that of the developer’s imagination. Sega Dreamcast is the first console to offer Internet gaming capabilities, home-to-arcade-to-portable gaming options and enhanced gameplay with the Visual Memory Unit (VMU). Sega Dreamcast is so advanced it offers developers the opportunity to create games that can actually learn the players moves and strategies, then use that information against them, creating a whole new gaming experience.

Konami of America Unveils ’99 Game Titles for Sony PlayStation Game Console

Konami of America, Inc., leading developer of electronic entertainment for the home video game and PC game markets, announced at E3 its ’99 game lineup for the Sony PlayStation. All of the titles leverage the PlayStation’s CD-quality sound, full-motion video, 360-degree camera movement, digital lighting, texture mapping and mammoth storage capabilities to create a movie-like experience for PlayStation users.

Building on several of its most successful franchises, Konami unveiled Metal Gear Solid VR Missions and sequels to last year’s Fisherman’s Bait, Major League Soccer, NBA In The Zone, NHL Blades of Steel, Suikoden and Vandal Hearts. Konami also announced new arcade, racing and action titles: Konami Arcade Classics, Konami Rally and Soul of the Samurai.

‘‘This year, we’re focusing on delivering the best games possible by leveraging our most popular franchises with the industry’s most innovative technology platforms," said Tim Dunley, Konami’s vice president of marketing. ‘‘For the Sony PlayStation, we have created new, more powerful dimensions to our legendary games like Metal Gear Solid, which we feel will play a big role in the PlayStation library this year."

RPG Titles

Capitalizing on one of the latest genres in the U.S., Konami will deliver two new titles, based on the company’s popular RPG franchises. Suikoden and Vandal Hearts.

Suikoden II

A mature-themed RPG, Suikoden II is a tale of two young childhood friends

who are hopelessly intertwined in a war -- one will become the leader of the resistance, while the other's path will lead to betrayal. With more than 40 hours of game play, players interact and manage more than 108 different characters that participate in all tactical map battles.

Suikoden II is scheduled for release in Q3 '99.

Vandal Hearts 2

Vandal Hearts 2 is a turn-based movement strategy game that takes the genre to new heights. Set in a medieval world of knights and magic, Vandal Hearts 2 has a mature story line about human drama and the struggle of desire and honor. With more than 120 different weapons and armor, the game has graphically compelling spell and special attack animations. Players can create multiple character classes based upon armament and weapons that level up and have imbedded secret moves.

Vandal Hearts 2 is scheduled for release in Q4 '99.

Action Titles

In the fast-moving action category, Konami continues to generate excitement among Metal Gear Solid fans with a special VR edition of its best-selling title, and unveils Soul of the Samurai, which will immerse PlayStation users into the middle of a dynamic and visually stunning action-adventure experience.

Metal Gear Solid VR Missions

In Metal Gear Solid VR Missions, players rejoin Solid Snake as he undergoes rigorous training modes to be the best at what he does -- espionage and counter-terrorism tactics. Players engage in more than 300 VR missions and solve puzzles to determine the killer in several murder cases. This game is perfect for the player who didn't get enough of Snake in Metal Gear Solid and for the player that needs extra work before moving onto the hit game.

Metal Gear Solid VR Missions is scheduled for release in Q4 '99.

Soul of the Samurai

With pre-rendered backgrounds for breath-taking visuals, Soul of the Samurai is a tale set in the first year of the Tenmei Era (1781) when peasants are suffering from famine and politics are steeped in corruption. Players can select between two main characters, a male ronin and a female kunoichi (ninja), who become involved in a conspiracy surrounding the local daimyo. Though there is one common theme, both characters must be played through to understand the entire plot. Soul of the Samurai is an action-oriented game with multiple techniques and weapons that players can use to slash through enemy samurais and other creatures, and adventure elements that allow players to talk to villagers and collect information.

Soul of the Samurai is scheduled for release in Q3 '99.

Sports Series Titles

Konami is putting even more emphasis on its growing sports category.

Fisherman's Bait 2

Fisherman's Bait 2 is the latest edition of the hit arcade game. This

version features even more locations for casting lures from famous spots around the U.S. and Japan. With varying weather conditions, lures and lakes, players are immersed in the real-life excitement of bass fishing -- without having to get wet. Additional features include the ability for a player to compete in a bass fishing tournament mode or to compete head-to-head with a friend on a split screen.

Fisherman’s Bait 2 is scheduled for release in Q4 ’99.

Major League Soccer 2000

Major League Soccer 2000, based on Konami’s award-winning International Superstar Soccer game, is the most realistic soccer game ever created for the PlayStation. Through Konami’s exclusive license with the MLS, players choose from more than 50 MLS and international teams and players, 10 international stadiums and various new player formations. Additionally, players can enjoy realistic game settings with lighting conditions that change as the day progresses and tighter control and higher variation of moves.

Major League Soccer 2000 is scheduled for release in Q4 ’99.

NBA In The Zone 2000

NBA In The Zone 2000 takes NBA action to the next level. The game features all 29 official NBA teams with more than 300 actual players, and incredible player realism due to motion capture technology with 3D-mapped, polygon graphics. NBA In The Zone 2000 includes signature moves of the players and advanced play-calling techniques allowing for a true simulation, including: behind-the-back dribbling, no-look passing, pivoting, fake shots, stealing, blocking and many more. It includes the 2000 start of season rosters, full-season play and the ability to trade and substitute players.

NBA In The Zone 2000 is scheduled for release in Q4 ’99.

NHL Blades of Steel 2000

This NHL/NHLPA-licensed title brings teeth-smashing realism to hockey fans through motion-captured animations, texture-mapped facial features of real players and depictions of signature moves. Players in NHL Blades of Steel 2000 play on authentic, fully detailed arenas with actual ice conditions, surrounded by true game sound effects, including the voice talents of NHL television announcer and voice of the San Jose Sharks, Randy Hahn.

Additional features include the ability to select free agents at any time and to track stats for various playoff and season records, from goal-tending to goal scoring to the number of minutes sitting in the penalty box.

NHL Blades of Steel 2000 is scheduled for release in Q4 ’99.

Konami Rally (code name)

Konami Rally is a racing game that puts players behind the wheel of fast-driving cars on multiple tracks and driving conditions -- down winding roads, across blind drifts and through bad weather. Players must bring the car to the finish line with only the skill of their driving and the trust of a navigator to guide them. Rally uses licensed vehicles, rules and stages.

Konami Rally is scheduled for release in Q4 ’99.

Arcade Title

To address the preferences of the nostalgic arcade game player and growing consumer audience, Konami will release Konami Arcade Classics, which provides a simple, yet enjoyable game experience.

Konami Arcade Classics

Konami Arcade Classics is a faithful re-issue of 10 classic arcade games, including: Circus Charlie, Gyrus, Pooyan, Road Fighter, Roc’n Rope, Scramble, Shao Lin’s Road, Super Cobra, Time Pilot and Yei Ar Kung Fu. With their original artwork, Konami Arcade Classics will bring back memories to the old arcade game player while bringing in a new audience to the simple elegance of the games from yesteryear.

Konami Arcade Classics is scheduled for release in Q3 ’99.

Accolade Announces Slave Zero for Sega Dreamcast

3D Giant Robot Action Shooter Comes to Sega Dreamcast This Fall

Accolade, a leading publisher and developer of video game software, announced that its highly anticipated 3D action shooter, Slave Zero, is being developed for Sega Dreamcast.

The Sega Dreamcast version of Slave Zero will release in the fall of 1999; the same time Sega Dreamcast becomes available in the United States. Slave Zero will be available for the personal computer in summer 1999.

‘‘The enormous sense of scale and the interactive gameplay of Slave Zero are truly beautiful on Sega Dreamcast," said Steve Ackrich, executive producer of Slave Zero. ‘‘It’s a great action game to offer to this new market of console gamers."

Sega Dreamcast possesses high resolution capabilities that will allow Slave Zero to run at 640 x 480, the maximum resolution achievable on a normal television. Sega Dreamcast’s 26 megabytes of RAM will easily handle the complex levels and interactive gameplay of Slave Zero.

The game gives players control of a 60-foot biomechanical war machine 500 years in the future in a battle against rival forces throughout the vast metropolis, S1-9. The city is ruled by the SovKahn, an evil dictator who possesses dark matter, a mysterious energy source that is used to control the populace. The player is part of a rebellion force who steals the technology to create a 60-foot slave robot to become one with the giant biomechanical creature, Slave Zero.

The ultimate objective is to destroy the SovKahn and restore peace. While smashing through the city, Slave Zero engages in adrenaline-filled combat against enemy ‘‘Sentinels" of various types, ranging from human-sized troops and tanks to 100-foot tall Titans armed with powerful Hellspike Plasma Rail Cannons that fire bolts of superheated metallic plasma.

Slave Zero is played from the third person perspective with an emphasis on scale and interactivity. Towering buildings line streets filled with cars,

trucks and buses racing by; airplanes whiz overhead and people run down sidewalks screaming. The city environments range from giant ‘‘Slave" factories and mazes of sewers to downtown metropolitan streets and military bases.

Though 60-feet tall, Slave Zero is quite agile, possessing the ability to run, jump on top of buildings and climb to the top of freeway overpasses. A wide variety of powerful weapons are available to the player, including the CR-80 Cyclone Saturation Cannon and the Valhalla Class Rocket Launcher. Slave Zero can also punch enemies, destroy buildings, and pick up tanker trucks, buses, girders and other pieces of the city environment and hurl them at enemy troops.

Slave Zero for Sega Dreamcast will offer both a single-player and four-player split screen mode.

Hasbro Interactive and FIRAXIS Games Announce Partnership to Create ‘Sid Meier’s Civilization III’ CD-ROM Game

Original Civilization Team is Reunited to Develop New Strategy Game

At a press conference conducted at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), two of the entertainment software industry’s biggest players, powerhouse publisher Hasbro Interactive and legendary game developer FIRAXIS Games announced a strategic partnership to bring the next generation of Civilizationr strategy games to life in Sid Meier’s Civilization III CD-ROM.

The conference reunited industry legend Sid Meier and his FIRAXIS Games partners, President and CEO Jeff Briggs, and Vice President of Software Development Brian Reynolds with their long-time friend and former MicroProse colleague Tony Parks, now Vice President of Research and Development at Hasbro Interactive. The event marked the coming together of the original team that worked on the groundbreaking Sid Meier’s Civilization and Sid Meier’s Civilization II interactive games - touted by many as two of the best games ever created in the history of the entertainment software industry.

‘‘To be partnered with FIRAXIS Games and legendary designer Sid Meier on this exciting project is truly a crowning moment for Hasbro Interactive," said Tom Dusenberry, Hasbro Interactive president. ‘‘We have had our eyes on the Civilization franchise for some time and we are thrilled that we can bring together all the critical people behind this great game to make some more industry magic."

‘‘We look forward to working with such a talented publisher as Hasbro Interactive," said Jeff Briggs, FIRAXIS Games president and CEO. ‘‘The Civilization franchise has played such an important role in all of our lives and careers. It is very fitting that we join together to work on the next generation of this great game."

The magic began in 1991 when legendary Game Designer Sid Meier created what was soon to become one of the greatest entertainment works of all time, Sid Meier’s Civilization strategy game for the personal computer. With limited technology, Meier empowered players of all ages to create their own civilizations throughout history and conquer the world! Simple graphics and intellectually stimulating game play added up to FUN! Sid Meier’s

Civilization received countless awards including a Computer Gaming World magazine's Hall of Fame induction and Best Game of All-Time honor to the Software Publishers Association Best Consumer Entertainment Program of the Year.

In 1996, history repeated itself with the creation of Sid Meier's Civilization II. With Meier serving as the visionary and Brian Reynolds leading the development work, another star was born. Civilization II was also an award-winning masterpiece receiving such accolades as PC Gamer's Game of the Year and Editor's choice awards to inclusion in Next Generation magazine's list of the Best Games of all Time.

In 1999, the partnership of Hasbro Interactive and FIRAXIS Games looks to break some more industry records with the development of Sid Meier's Civilization III. FIRAXIS Games will begin development on the title in the coming months.

Midway's Spy Hunter & Moon Patrol Ships to Retail for Game Boy Color System

Heart pounding action has returned and this time its portable. Midway Home Entertainment Inc., one of the industry's leading video game publishers, announced that it has shipped the next installment to its Arcade's Greatest Hits series, Spy Hunter and Moon Patrol, for play on the Game Boy Color. Owners of the original Game Boy will also be able to experience the classic arcade action of Spy Hunter and Moon Patrol.

''It's exciting to bring the classic gut-wrenching action of Spy Hunter and Moon Patrol to a new generation of gamers," said Paula Cook, director of marketing at Midway Home Entertainment. ''Nostalgic Game Boy Color owners were enthralled by our first Arcade's Greatest Hits installment, Joust and Defender and provides new challenges in the second set in the series."

In Spy Hunter, Midway challenges gamers to eliminate foreign spies from the country. Players will have machine guns, oil slicks and missiles at their disposal in the Spy Hunter vehicle embarking on the action-packed ''Mission: Spy Hunter." Along the way, players will be able to visit strategically placed Weapons Vans and replenish their arsenal. The danger level is high as players try to avoid friendly motorcycles and vehicles while trying to outrun or destroy enemy vehicles who are on a mission of their own - - to seek out and destroy you!

Gamers face a different set of challenges in Moon Patrol. As moon buggy drivers, players need to travel across the moon's surface as quickly as possible. Along the way they must avoid huge craters, exploding land mines, moon rocks and avoid missile fire from UFOs.

The Best Baseball Game Ever Debuts for Console With Major League Baseball Support

The 3DO Company announced that the High Heat Baseball 2000 game for the PlayStation game console is available at retail stores nationwide. Widely hailed as the best baseball game ever, High Heat Baseball 2000 delivers maximum realism with both the Major League Baseball (MLB) and Major League Baseball Players Association (MLPBA) licenses, and is now available for

the first time on console.

A fast-paced, leading edge baseball game featuring actual baseball players in high resolution 512 x 240 graphics, highly detailed 3D stadium environments, and high quality 3D player animations derived from motion capture with real time lighting, High Heat Baseball 2000 is as close as you can get to the real thing. The perfect balance between action and realism is accentuated through the unique pitcher-batter confrontation, superior artificial intelligence, and a speedy pace of play unlike any other baseball game on the market today.

Five game modes -- Exhibition, Season, Home Run Challenge, Playoffs and Quick Play -- give players every style of play they could ask for, whether they're a hard core baseball fanatic or just want to see if they've got what it takes to get one over the plate to McGwire. Family mode setting guarantees that anyone can jump in and join the fun.

The innovative Pitcher-Batter interface, with 9 different batting swings and the ability to Guess Pitch, allows players to bat the way real Major Leaguers do by predicting the pitch, then timing their swing and choosing their bat location with multiple discrete swing positions. On defense, 3DO's proprietary TruPitch(TM) artificial intelligence features 9 different pitch types and virtually infinite pitch locations. Revolutionary TruPlay(TM) artificial intelligence provides true-to-life base running, fielding and managing. Budding Earl Weavers can also trade players and recruit from the minors to build perfect teams.

High Heat Baseball 2000 features 37 beautifully rendered, high-resolution stadiums, including two classic and four never-before-seen stadiums. Giants announcer Ted Robinson provides play-by-play commentary.

The High Heat Baseball 2000 game is also available for the PC, and has won rave reviews since its release. The game is custom designed to take advantage of each specific platform's technology and feature set to provide the best possible gameplay. This results in 3DO brands reaching across multiple platforms while each version remains an original gaming experience. ''High Heat Baseball 2000 is on track to be not only the best baseball game of this season, but possibly of all time," said PC Gamer magazine about the PC version. Computer Gaming World magazine adds, ''This game has so much going for it that if you're a hard-core baseball fan looking to get in on the action, this game says hello like the business end of a Louisville Slugger."

High Heat Baseball 1999 was the recipient of a number of awards from the electronic entertainment press, including both '1998 Baseball Game of the Year' and 'Best Artificial Intelligence in a Sports Game' from Warzone.com, and '1998 Game of the Year' from Gamersvoice/Perfect Game Web site. To compound the praise heaped upon the last year's award winner, High Heat Baseball 1999 was a veritable field of dreams that, through its own simulation of the 1999 season, successfully predicted Mark McGwire's shattering of the long-standing home run record.

NYKO Technologies Introduces Exclusive 900MHz RF MAX 900, Permitting Wireless Gaming for Leading Game Systems

NYKO Technologies Inc., leading innovator and manufacturer of accessory products for video game fans, has introduced the RF MAX 900, a patented

wireless accessory that delivers the RF wireless gaming experience to owners of the world’s most-popular video gaming systems, including Sony PlayStation, Nintendo 64, SNES and Sega DreamCast.

Using state-of-the-art 900MHz wireless RF (radio frequency) technology, NYKO’s RF MAX 900 accessory eliminates line-of-sight interference common with infrared- (IR) type wireless devices. This means that kids and family pets can run between the TV and an active player without interrupting the action.

Another benefit of this advanced RF technology is that it is able to transmit signals up to 30 feet away, allowing gamers to play comfortably from the sofa instead of huddled on the carpet in front of the TV set. The RF MAX 900 may even be used with multi-player games.

In addition, 900 MHz technology allows the gaming action to continue nonstop; there is no lag in transmitting signals that could slow up the game in progress -- a problem commonly associated with infrared-type devices. And because wires never get in the way of a game’s twists and turns, playing action is smoother and more natural than ever before.

Designed for owners of PlayStation, Nintendo systems (N64 and SNES) and the soon-to-be-released Sega DreamCast, the NYKO RF MAX 900 is scheduled for late-spring delivery to major game and toy retailers with a suggested retail price of $39.95. The RF MAX 900 was designed and manufactured in the United States.

NYKO’s wireless technology allows use of virtually all controllers and game accessories, including specialized items such as dual-shock controllers, Rumble Paks(tm), mouse and trackball devices, and memory paks. Avid gamers who rely on multi-tap adaptors will find that the NYKO RF MAX 900 helps them expand the number of players who can join together in the action, boosting the limit to eight players a session, up from three.

‘‘NYKO’s wireless accessory is truly convenient and a great addition to the family gaming center, offering more fun and flexibility than ever before," said Robert J. Rienick, vice president of Sales and Marketing, NYKO Technologies. ‘‘The RF MAX 900 saves consumers money because it eliminates the need for extra RF adaptors and costly infrared wireless controllers. One product works perfectly with all your gaming accessories."

Game Boy Draws Grown Up Attention

The screen looks like something out of the Atari days, or at best, ColecoVision; the buttons are a bit too small for adult fingers; and the sound is a far cry from today’s video games.

Despite that, Nintendo Co. Ltd.’s Game Boy Color is the best portable gaming device yet, and it’s flying off U.S. shelves to the tune of 2 million units in the first five months alone.

"It’s not this little stepchild anymore," said Beth Llewelyn, spokeswoman for Nintendo of America Inc., during an interview at last week’s Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles.

Indeed, it’s not.

At the annual computer game confab, Game Boy groupies gathered around the smaller-than-paperback-sized devices at the booths of software developers, checking out the new games. Almost all the major console developers -- and a few from the PC side -- are supporting, or are planning to support, the devices.

Mattel Media plans to release three titles, among them Barbie Ocean Discovery. Capcom has five in the works, including a pint-sized rendition of Resident Evil and Street Fighter Alpha. GT Interactive will port Duke Nukem and Oddworld Abe over to the platform. And Disney Interactive plans to release a Tarzan game in time for the movie's release on June 18.

"Everyone has finally realized just how big the Game Boy market is," said Dan Harnett, spokesman for GT Interactive. In total, Nintendo is expecting more than 75 Game Boy Color titles to hit the shelves this year.

It's not hard to understand the support, said one graphics designer for Capcom who asked that her name not be used. "It is really easy to put the game into the Gameboy," she said. "Conversion takes weeks, not months."

And the potential rewards are astounding.

When the Game Boy Color debuted last November at $79.95, sales skyrocketed, jumping from year-on-year growth of 17 percent to 228 percent for the first full quarter following the device's release.

The new handheld rode the tidal wave of near-hysteria that followed the release of Pokemon in the U.S. in September 1998. Sales of the Pokemon Blue and Red cartridges topped 2.6 million in the first six months and put the two titles in the No. 1 and No. 2 slots on the game software charts for all platforms at the end of 1998.

"Pokemon -- and the launch of the Game Boy Color -- have really made the market take off," said Matt Gravett, video game hardware analyst for market watcher PC Data.

Over the next year, Nintendo intends to ship another 6 million of the new color Game Boys, adding their numbers to the more than 70 million sold since the handheld game device launched in 1989.

Not bad for an 8-bit processor connected to a 160-by-144-pixel 56-color screen.

Still, despite its relatively lightweight technical specs, the Game Boy has spawned few competitors -- Nintendo boasts that it owns 99 percent of the market.

Furby-creator Tiger Electronics Ltd. is not daunted. Looking to spiff up its year-old Game.com handheld, the Vernon Hills, Ill., company plans to add cases in five new colors.

Still, the new Game.com Pocket Pro will only have a gray-scale screen. Adding color would raise the price of the Game.com from its low-cost leading $29.95 to around $80 or $90, said Christou.

"We are not expecting to be another Game Boy," said spokesman Paul Christou. "We are an alternative to Game Boy -- to let parents know there is another system out there that their kids can use."

So far, Tiger has done a good job of gaining key titles like Madden

Football 99, Resident Evil 2 and Monopoly.

Yet, while Tiger has hunted down some key developers, Nintendo still has all the attention. "Game Boy is very hot for us," said Beckie Holmes, director of product marketing for Disney Interactive. "Our support for the platform will only deepen."

Nintendo Says N64 Game Unit to Continue

Nintendo Co Ltd will continue to develop its Nintendo64 game machine even after it releases a new generation of home-use games, Nintendo managing director Hiroshi Imanishi said on Friday.

He told Reuters in an interview that the company will develop the two lines separately and is not considering making the Nintendo64 compatible with the new product, which will hit global markets at the end of 2000.

However, the new product, tentatively called ‘‘Dolphin," may be linked to the hand-held Game Boy, Imanishi said.

Nintendo will continue to develop new more powerful software incorporating voice-recognition technologies for the Nintendo64, he said.

On Wednesday, Nintendo announced a comprehensive tie-up with Matsushita Electric Industrial Co Ltd to produce its new generation of home-use game machines.

Matsushita will develop and supply DVD media and drive devices for the game machines, which will make use of the memory power of digital video disc (DVD) technology, a high capacity successor to compact discs.

The tie-up with Matsushita, for which DVD media is a core business, is expected to strengthen Nintendo’s competitive position against Sony Corp which has a business alliance with Toshiba Corp .

But Imanishi declined to specify on what points Nintendo’s new products will be superior to those of rival Sony.

‘‘It is difficult to comment at this point in time," he said. ‘‘But we are using the most advanced technologies in the world. "We should have the competitive advantage in terms of both development costs and speed."

Where the Nintendo64 sold only 20 million machines worldwide compared with sales of more than 50 million units for rival Sony’s PlayStation, introduction of Nintendo’s new-generation game machines will turn the tables on Sony, predicted Imanishi.

Sony, Nintendo Sleeping Easy

With Sega’s latest foray into the $6 billion video game market on display at the industry’s annual gathering attracting hordes of eager gamers, you might think rivals Sony and Nintendo are looking nervously over their shoulders.

Not even close, according to representatives for both companies at the Electronic Entertainment Expo.

Nintendo stole a bit of Sega’s thunder earlier this week, announcing a deal with IBM and Matsushita to create the technology for its next generation console, a 128-bit device currently code-named Dolphin.

In March, industry leader Sony announced it would begin selling the so-called PlayStation II, a DVD-based system which is comparable to the Dolphin’s computing muscle and twice as powerful as Nintendo’s current model, the cartridge-based N64.

And Sony has one huge advantage over its rivals -- all the current PlayStation games work fine on the new machine.

Both products should reach the market late next year, and both use DVD technology as a software medium. ‘‘There won’t be any significant difference in graphics quality," said Howard C. Lincoln, chairman of Nintendo of America Inc. ‘‘The fight will be over who can make the best games."

Prices have not been announced for either machine. The Dreamcast debuts in September for a suggested retail price of $199.99.

Both the PlayStation and N64 currently retail for $129.99, with Sony on top mainly because it has far more games available than Nintendo. Sony charges about $10 a game as a licensing fee, about half Nintendo’s rate, which attracts developers. Also attractive is PlayStation’s CD format, easier to work with than the cartridge Nintendo uses.

Sony, which controls about 60 percent of the U.S. market to 30 percent for Nintendo and about 5 percent for Sega, has few concerns.

‘‘"Industry experts are not generally supporting Dreamcast." said Sony vice president Phil Harrison.

Visitors to Sega’s vast display, featuring dozens of hands-on Dreamcast players, gave mixed reviews.

‘‘It’s OK," said Joel Goodman of San Diego, as he tried to avoid extermination while playing ‘‘House of the Dead 2." ‘‘It’s got high resolution, but I don’t know how it will do against PlayStation II." Goodman said he would rent the machine before deciding if he wanted to purchase one.

Christian Magat, 19, of Gardena, was much more positive.

‘‘It’s a great system," he said as he pounded on a friend in a Dreamcast version of Virtua Fighter. ‘‘It’s like getting arcade games at home. I have two ordered."

Perhaps the real question is: How does Sega, whose PlayStation rival Saturn sank like a stone, plan to compete with its bigger, already-entrenched rivals?

It will be the first on the market, giving it time to gain valuable market share. It will also be the first Internet-ready home console, allowing gamers to go online, play against others a continent away and even send e-mail.

However, Electronic Gaming Monthly editor John Davison thinks Sony, with a PlayStation in one of every five American homes, will remain the boss after all the latest systems are in stores. ‘‘As long as Sony prices PSII carefully, they will clean up."

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Protector Update

The Protector home page has been updated with the latest milestone accomplishments... while there’s not a lot of new verbage, it at least shows you I’m getting closer to the end.

Given that I said Protector was 80% complete when I received it (I was probably being optimistic, however), I’d now say that Protector is 90% complete. I also anticipate that the last 10% will be easier than the first 10%, since I won’t have the steep learning curve on the code.

I see no reason at the current time that Protector won’t come out in 1999. Things could change, but right now, it looks solid.

Carl Forhan
Songbird Productions

Report from E3: NUON

all,

Just got back from E3 and I thought I’d pass along some brief thoughts about NUON.

The VM Labs "booth" wasn’t very elaborate. Just a couple couches, some packaging mockups, and a large screen tv running playable demos. (It was also tucked away in the back of a smaller side hall.) I saw two games (T3K booth" wasn’t very elaborate. Just a couple couches, some packaging mockups, and a large screen tv running playable demos. (It was also tucked away in the back of a smaller side hall.) I saw two games (T3K no visible pixels." Rather than pixels, it has the N64 blur thing going on. (I think the Playstation version looks better.)

The VLM faired worse. From about 10 feet away it was indistinguishable from

the Jag VLM. Only upon closer inspection could you spot the difference -- again more blur.

IS3 was what really killed it for me. A pixelated mess. (Which is odd considering all the claims about NUON's power.) For a 3D game everything looked liked scaling sprites.

E3 Report: Battlesphere - It's Official

Posted by John Hardie

O.K. Gang. I'm here at E-3 and was handed a press release from Mark Goodreau and Dana Henry at Hasbro yesterday.

It's Official! Hasbro has released the rights to the Atari Jaguar Platform!

Below is the text from the Press Release:

Beverly, MA (May 14,1999) - Leading entertainment software publisher, Hasbro Interactive announced today it has released all rights that it may have to the vintage Atari hardware platform, the Jaguar.

Hasbro Interactive acquired rights to many Atari properties, including the legendary Centipede, Missile Command, and Pong games, in a March 1998 acquisitiomn from JTS Corporation.

This announcement will allow software developers to create and publish software for the Jaguar system without having to obtain a licensing agreement with Hasbro Interactive for such platform development. Hasbro Interactive cautioned, however, that the developers should not use the Atari trademark or logo in connection with their games or present the games as authorized or approved by Hasbro Interactive.

"Hasbro Interactive is strictly focused on developing and publishing entertainment software for the PC and the next generation game consoles," said Richard Cleveland, Head of Marketing for Hasbro Interactive's Atari Business Unit. "We realize there is a passionate audience of diehard Atari fans who want to keep the Jaguar system alive, and we don't want to prevent them from doing that. We will not interfere with the efforts of software developers to create software for the Jaguar system."

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Well, there you have it folks. I talked with Scott and Steph yesterady and I'm sure they'll have an announcement in a day or two after they recover from the show.

It's back to the show floor for me. Hope that brightened up everyone's day.

John Hardie
www.atarihq.com

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(Revised 05/17/99)

The 1999 Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles this past week (Thursday - Saturday, May 13 - 15) was an exciting time for classic gamers. Retro titles were seemingly everywhere. Leading the way was Hasbro with their booth full of signs, demos and even Pac-Man himself.

VM Labs, a technology company based in Mountain View, California, shared a booth with Motorola. For the first time, phenomenal sequences of games or applications in development were shown. At the top of the list was Iron Soldier and Tempest 3000.

Nyko hosted an impressive in-booth cocktail party on Thursday evening. Miss Nyko 1999 was introduced to help lure the press into the event. Nyko is a proud sponsor of the Classic Gaming Expo to take place in August. They are also makers of the Classic Trackball for the PlayStation game console.

John Hardie and a team of other Classic Gaming Expo coordinators worked the show to foster even more support for their August expo. Nolan Bushnell reaffirmed his enthusiasm for the Classic Gaming Show as did other dignitaries such as Jay Smith from Adrenalin, David Naghi of Nyko, Don Thomas from VM Labs, point people from Hasbro and others. Also in attendance at E3 were classic gaming names such as Garry Tramiel, Ted Hoff, Christian Svensson (MCV), the 4Play crew, Jerry Jessop, Leonard Herman, Mark Santora, Chris Cavanaugh and more.

On Friday evening, Sony Computer Entertainment America (PlayStation) hosted yet another phenomenal E3 party. Around 4,000 select industry colleagues enjoyed a free concert by Beck and danced and ate until the wee hours of the morning at Sony Pictures Studio in Culver City, California. The VIP lounge at the party found the likes of Donny Osmond, Gene Wilder and Hanson. No one remembers seeing Jennifer Love Hewitt however.

Hasbro Interactive distributed a press release dated Friday, May 14 to John Hardie that formally announced Hasbro’s decision to release "all rights that it may have to the vintage Atari hardware platform, the Jaguar." Although the release still leaves some questions unanswered as to how unpublished Jaguar titles get distributed, it will assuredly make Jaguar fans across the world very pleased.

Nintendo announced an alliance with IBM and Matsushita (Panasonic) to produce a 400 MHz copper microchip-based gaming console before Christmas 2000.

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A-ONE’s Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Microsoft Trial To Resume June 1, Aide Says

The landmark Microsoft Corp. antitrust trial will resume on June 1, an aide to U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson said Tuesday.

The trial adjourned in late February and its resumption has been delayed while Jackson heard another trial.

An aide to the judge said that, barring some unforeseen delay, Jackson will resume hearing the non-jury trial Tuesday, June 1, after the Memorial Day holiday.

Microsoft went on trial in October 1988, on allegations by the Justice Department and 19 states that it violated the nation’s antitrust laws by abusing monopoly power in the market for the Windows operating system for personal computers.

Each side presented 12 witnesses during its case-in-chief and each will present three rebuttal witnesses when the trial resumes, a process that may take a month or more.

Microsoft has called America Online Inc. (NYSE:AOL - news) executive David Colburn as a hostile witness, along with Silicon Valley software executive Gordon Eubanks, president and chief executive of Oblix, Inc., and economist Richard Schmalensee.

The government called IBM executive Garry Norris, economist Franklin Fisher and computer expert Edward Felten.

In addition, Microsoft will take testimony from AOL President Steve Case Friday in Washington, and other depositions later.

Although the two sides announced possible settlement talks, there has been no public indication of any settlement of the case.

U.S. Judge Says Microsoft Trial To Proceed

A federal judge has denied Microsoft Corp.’s request to delay an antitrust trial with small Connecticut software firm Bristol Technology Inc., Bristol said Monday.

U.S. District Judge Janet Hall set a June 2 start date, and also ruled that Bristol may share information with lawyers for other antitrust cases pending against Microsoft -- one brought by the U.S. Department of Justice and 19 states, and another by Orem, Utah-based Caldera Inc. .

‘‘I think it strengthens (everybody’s) case against Microsoft, because now it’s like three different people working together," Marybeth McGuire, spokeswoman for Danbury, Conn.-based Bristol, told Reuters.

A Microsoft spokesman, however, said the judge’s ruling on information-sharing stopped far short of what Bristol sought.

‘‘It’s important to note that the court’s modified protective order is limited to a few specific areas and is much less broad than what Bristol had been seeking," said Tom Pilla, a spokesman for Redmond, Wash.-based Microsoft.

The Bristol suit, filed in U.S. District Court in Bridgeport, Conn. on August 18 of last year, alleges that Microsoft has stifled competition by controlling access to its Windows NT source code -- a charge that Microsoft has hotly disputed.

In her decision last Friday, Hall said that Bristol may share information on ‘‘the extent of Microsoft’s market power in the technical workstation or departmental-server operating system market as defined by Bristol, including whether it has obtained... monopoly power."

She also allowed Bristol to share information on ‘‘use by Microsoft of its alleged monopoly power in the PC operating system market to obtain or attempt to obtain a monopoly in the technical workstation or departmental server operating system markets," and in some other areas, according to the ruling, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters.

Bristol said it expected similar rulings from the judges in the U.S. government and Caldera cases against Microsoft.

‘‘We’re hoping that the judges from those cases are going to feel the same way -- they were waiting for our judge to rule on that," McGuire said. ‘‘So anything that pertains to Bristol, they can give it to us -- documents, e-mails, testimony."

Microsoft downplayed the significance of the ruling. "Bristol’s attempt to seek information from other, totally unrelated cases, can only be viewed as a lack of confidence in their own case," Pilla said.

Jury selection for the Bristol trial, to be held in Bridgeport, Conn., will start on May 20. Expected to last for 6-8 weeks, it stands to be the first of the Microsoft antitrust cases to receive a ruling.

Closely held Bristol, which had 1998 revenues of $8 million compared to Microsoft’s $14.5 billion, makes a product called Wind/U, which acts as a bridge between developers writing software for computers based both on Microsoft’s Windows operating system and on Unix.

Though Bristol’s case is not connected to the U.S. government’s and Caldera’s cases, it makes the similar claim that Microsoft is using its monopoly in the market for desktop operating systems to crush competition.

Microsoft has argued that Bristol’s claims are without merit, and that Bristol is merely using the courts to obtain more favorable licensing terms for Microsoft source code.

Source code is the all-important blueprint that tells computer programmers how a software program works.

Microsoft shares gained $2.25 to close at $79.13 on Nasdaq, on heavy volume of 32.9 million shares.

Software Maker To Take on Microsoft

A tiny software maker that once did business with Microsoft is taking on the maker of Windows next month in a trial some say could break new ground in antitrust challenges against Bill Gates and company.

Bristol Technology Inc., a Danbury company with just 70 employees, is scheduled to go to trial June 2 in a lawsuit that claims Microsoft is improperly withholding software code that Bristol says is vital for its survival.

The case is not directly related to the larger lawsuit filed against Microsoft by the U.S. Department of Justice and 19 states. However, it has a similar theme.

The government suit contends that Microsoft illegally wielded the power of its dominant Windows computer operating system to expand into new markets, such as Internet software, and thus crush competitors.

Bristol contends Microsoft is abusing the market power of its Windows NT business software, which runs powerful corporate machines that direct networks of smaller personal computers.

‘‘What we’re talking about here is the brain and the central nervous system of corporations," said Ed Black, president of the Computer & Communications Industry Association, a trade group. ‘‘So one of the concerns beyond pure economics is that all of those central nervous systems of many companies wind up potentially dependent upon, reliant on and subservient to the wishes of a powerful monopoly."

Another small software maker, Orem, Utah-based Caldera, also has a suit pending against Microsoft alleging abusive business practices.

Ken Wasch, president of the Software and Information Industry Association, said the outcome of both cases, while uncertain, could have implications for the larger antitrust lawsuit.

‘‘Both the Bristol and Caldera cases explore novel issues related to the responsibility of the dominant operating system vendor in working with independent software vendors," he said.

Bristol makes a product called Wind/U, which allows programs such as word processors and spreadsheets written to work with Windows to be converted to run on computers with different operating systems such as Unix.

Unix is sold by a number of companies including Sun Microsystems, an arch-foe of Microsoft. It is a major competitor to Windows NT.

In order to make Wind/U, Bristol needs access to the source code - the programming blueprints - for Windows NT. Bristol had a 3-year licensing agreement for Windows NT source code with Microsoft, but that expired in 1997.

In its lawsuit, Bristol claims Microsoft is illegally preventing it from obtaining the Windows source code, in effect severing Bristol’s customers from the latest Windows technology.

Microsoft denies the allegations and says Bristol’s lawsuit is merely an attempt to negotiate a more favorable licensing agreement.

Microsoft spokesman Tom Pilla said his company was able to negotiate a licensing agreement with Mainsoft, one of Bristol’s competitors, under the same terms it offered Bristol.

He said Bristol turned down those terms, then hired an economic expert, a

public relations firm and a legal team to sue Microsoft.

‘‘This is Bristol’s attempt to use the court system to obtain something that isn’t theirs in order to obtain an unfair advantage over Mainsoft," said Pilla.

Bristol Chief Executive Keith Blackwell dismissed Microsoft’s claim that his lawsuit is a strong-arm negotiating tactic.

‘‘It’s really just ridiculous," he said. ‘‘That would be a very time-consuming and expensive negotiating ploy."

The two companies will square off in court just as the Microsoft antitrust trial in Washington, D.C., is expected to resume after a three-month recess.

Caldera’s antitrust suit against Microsoft claims the company’s pricing practices and marketing techniques effectively destroyed the market for a desktop computer operating system its sells called DR-DOS, while building a monopoly for Microsoft’s MS-DOS, the precursor to Windows. That case is scheduled to go to trial in January.

Microsoft dismissed any comparisons between the Bristol and Caldera cases and the Department of Justice case.

‘‘We don’t think that these cases are linked in any way," Pilla said.

Lycos To Take On AOL

Lycos Inc. is close to a deal with a software company that would move it one step closer to competing directly with America Online Inc., the nation’s largest online service, people involved in the discussions said Wednesday.

The partnership, which is expected to be announced Monday, would give customers software to enable them to access the Internet from desktop computers and go directly to Lycos’ news, research, chat groups and retail sites. The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, declined to name the software company.

The deal is expected to be just one in a string Lycos will announce in the wake of its failed merger with USA Networks and Ticketmaster Online-Citysearch Inc.

‘‘There’s a lot of things we’ve been looking at in terms of acquisitions," said Bob Davis, chairman and chief executive of Lycos.

He declined to comment on any specific deals but said, ‘‘You can look to us to continue to be aggressive on that front."

The controversy over Lycos’ plans to merge with USA Networks, which owns the Home Shopping Network, had a silver lining, creating a swirl of publicity that helped propel Lycos to the No. 1 site on the World Wide Web, surpassing Yahoo!

The companies called off their agreement Wednesday after it became clear they would not get the support of more than 50 percent of Lycos

shareholders. Lycos investors wanted the company to focus on the Internet, and not to be encumbered by traditional retail problems like inventory control and distribution.

Lycos emerged from the failed merger as a stronger company and in a better position to negotiate with other suitors or acquisition targets.

‘‘I’m sure Bob Davis’ phone was ringing off the hook with other companies that want to get in there," said Melissa Bane, director of Internet market strategies for the Yankee Group, a Boston consulting firm. ‘‘Lycos is probably well positioned to go for another media company,"

Wall Street was bullish on the breakup of the deal and Lycos’ prospects, sending its stock up $8.75 to $107 a share on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

To beat America Online, Lycos needs to raise its brand image with current online consumers, and with the 70 percent of U.S. households that are not yet connected to the Internet.

Davisalso said, ‘‘I wouldn’t rule out ownership, investment or partnership in companies in the commerce arena."

One piece in his strategy is the direct telephone or cable connection to the Internet. Lycos currently has partnerships with MindSpring and EarthLink, and Davis said he will continue to forge more alliances.

And while the company’s deal with USA Networks and Ticketmaster fell apart, the companies agreed to increase marketing one another. Lycos’ name, for example, will be promoted on the Home Shopping Network and SciFi channel and on the envelopes of Tickemaster, which sells tickets to concerts and sporting events.

Davis said he was disappointed the merger agreement collapsed. He was hoping to join forces with USA Networks because it had superior assets, cash flow, and distribution systems.

‘‘I saw at the time the potential, and I still do," he said. He explained, ‘‘When we put the transaction together, a lot of people misjudged how difficult it would be to value that kind of transaction, myself included."

Lycos may still be a takeover target for another company, but if Lycos accepts an offer before July 15, the Waltham, Mass.-based company will pay $35 million to USA Networks.

After that date, the company is fair game.

Lycos’ largest shareholder, David Wetherell, chairman of CMG Information Services, resigned from Lycos board of directors in March and hired an investment bank to look for a suitor to bust up the deal with USA Networks.

‘‘We are gratified that Lycos shareholders will now have new avenues to realize appropriate value for their shares," Wetherell said in a statement.

A call to his office was not immediately returned.

Davis said Wetherell, who owns about 20 percent of the company, would not be rejoining the board.

New Board of Directors Positions Conxion(TM) for Period of Rapid Growth

Four New Members Will Provide Focus and Strength for E-Business

Conxion Corporation, a leading Internet delivery provider, today announced the appointment of four new members to the company's board of directors. Messrs. John B. Goodrich, Rick Marz, Albert "Rocky" Pimentel and Sam Tramiel will join CEO and Chairman Antonio Salerno on the board.

"Conxion has arrived at a critical juncture in its history as we prepare to triple company size this year, expand our nationwide presence and backbone to 125 cities," said Salerno. "We are pleased to gain the leadership of these four gentlemen on our board of directors, who have vast operational experience managing technology companies and in taking companies public. Our new board will help decide how to make the best use of our recently announced infrastructure investments with Williams Communications, and refine our joint venture and market strategies to best serve stakeholders."

John B. Goodrich is a name partner of high-tech law firm Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati, which he joined in 1970. His practice includes representation of new companies in formation, private and public financing, organizational matters for early stage and mature companies, mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, intellectual property, litigation management and technology licensing strategies, both domestic and international. He represents public and privately held companies in a diverse array of industries. Mr. Goodrich presently serves on a number of boards of both public and private companies. He holds a B.A. degree from Stanford University (1963), a J.D. degree from the University of Southern California (1966) and a LL.M. degree in taxation from New York University (1970).

Rick Marz is a 35-year veteran of the semiconductor and integrated circuit industry. During this period he has held several engineering, marketing and sales management positions with both domestic and international responsibility. Currently, he is the executive vice president, geographic markets of LSI Logic. In this position, Mr. Marz is responsible for the overall management of LSI Logic's sales activities in the North American, Japanese, Asian and European markets. Prior to joining LSI Logic in 1995, Mr. Marz was vice president of sales and marketing for the Americas at Advanced Micro Devices, Inc.

Albert "Rocky" Pimentel has over twenty years of experience in founding, directing and contributing to the financial success of several leading technology companies. He serves on the boards of both academic and commercial organizations. He currently is the senior vice president and chief financial officer of WebTV Networks, Inc. Prior to joining WebTV Networks, Mr. Pimentel was senior vice president and chief financial officer at LSI Logic and also was a founder of Conner Peripherals, Inc. Previously, he served on the board of directors of Livingston Technologies and LSI Logic. In 1997, he was involved in mergers totaling $1.2B.

Sam Tramiel has over twenty-five years of experience in high-technology companies in both domestic and international markets. Mr. Tramiel is currently a principal of Tramiel Capital, Inc. which specializes in real estate and investments. He serves on the boards of many high-tech companies and also is involved in several venture capital investment groups. From 1988 to 1994, he was the CEO of Atari Corporation. During the period from 1972 to 1984 he held various positions at Commodore International, Ltd., one of the pioneering companies in the development

and marketing of personal computers.

Conxion Corporation is a rapidly growing, independent Internet provider headquartered in Silicon Valley (Santa Clara, Calif.). Building on its industry leading competence in managing high volume downloads, Conxion is helping a wide variety of E-businesses bring their applications to the Web. Conxion's resources include: nationwide tier one, all-IP network; 5 data centers today, 15 by the end of 1999; expertise in security, high-performance hosting, application development, and other managed services. For more information, see http://www.conxion.net.

Netscape Unveils New Browser

Netscape Communications Corp. today released a new version of its Internet browser and e-mail software that offers security improvements, additional search features and dozens of bug fixes.

Netscape Communicator 4.6, successor to version 4.51, also adds enhancements to speed page loading, a company statement said.

The free software comes bundled with RealNetworks Inc.'s RealPlayer G2, allowing users to find and play streaming audio and video on the Internet.

A feature called SmartBrowsing allows consumers to enter keywords such as ''New York movies," ''San Francisco sports" or ''Boston dining" into the browser location bar. The browser then searches listings from America Online Inc.'s Digital City for corresponding information.

The SmartBrowsing feature also allows keyword searches of RealNetworks' RealGuide service, which lists audio and video files on the Web.

The new browser corrects potential security vulnerabilities reported in recent months by independent programmers, the company said.

Hewlett-Packard To Unveil Graphics Workstations

Hewlett-Packard Co. said Wednesday it will unveil a new line of graphics computers that it says are twice as fast as its older models, and will help engineers handle more complex simulations, like car crash tests, from their desktops.

The new Unix-based HP Visualize workstations are the latest push by the Palo Alto, Calif.-based company to gain a competitive edge against other manufacturers, including Sun Microsystems Inc., International Business Machines Corp. and Silicon Graphics Inc. SGI has also been trying to capture more of the graphics computer market by introducing lower-priced machines.

HP's new workstations range in price from $9,888 to $22,636, for the most advanced model, a dual-processor machine that handles the most compute-intensive tasks.

''Manufacturers need ways to shorten their product development cycles to be

competitive," said Patty Azzarello, HP's worldwide marketing manager for workstation systems. ''This new product line will allow us to expand our market share."

''It is solidly aligned with what their customers want," said Richard Fichera, vice president of Giga Information Group. "The Holy Grail of visual computing is to model entire mechanical things -- like an entire car -- on a computer. And they are getting close to that threshold."

But Fichera also said that the demands of engineers are changing so quickly that not even doubling a machine's capacity meets all their needs.

''They want to be able to simulate not just a car, but a moving car that crashes into a wall while the engine is running to see what happens to the pistons. The frontier keeps expanding and the intuitive demands are still in order of magnitude beyond what systems can do."

In Future, Nearly Everything Seen Tied To The Net

There are 63 microprocessors in a new General Motors Corp. Cadillac Seville, a Web-enabled refrigerator really is on the way and already you can talk to your car via an Auto PC.

And chances are they will all be connected -- someday.

It may sound far-fetched, but if some of high-technology's heaviest hitters are to be believed, it is also true.

''If you really take a long-term view ... people still tend to underestimate what the Internet will do for us," Steve Ballmer, president of Microsoft Corp., said Thursday at Tibco Software Inc.'s Strategic Directions 1999 conference in San Francisco.

''The Internet over time will be a place where any business model can be sustained," Ballmer said.

Of course, not all of the Internet start-ups will survive, Yahoo Inc. Chief Executive Tim Koogle said in a later speech.

But the Internet and the browsers used to navigate it have broken the old rules, executives said.

''Thanks to this great network in the sky called the Internet, everyone's got access to just about everything," said Robert Austrian, an analyst at NationsBanc Montgomery Securities in San Francisco.

That includes stock trading, where some 17 percent of equities now are traded via the Internet through online brokerages, according to Gregor Bailar, chief information officer for Nasdaq.

It also extends to banks, where according to consulting firm Booz-Allen & Hamilton, it costs banks 100 times more to process a transaction at a traditional branch office than over the Internet.

''It took 100 years for there to be a billion phones and it's going to take 10 years for there to be one billion cell phones," said Vivek Ranadive, chairman and founder of Tibco Software, which plans to raise as much as

$60 million through an initial public offering.

Reuters Group Plc, the largest provider of financial news and information, owns a majority stake in Tibco and fully owns Tibco Finance Technology Inc., the arm that sells Tibco products to the financial services industry.

Tibco's software technology lets information be shared instantaneously among different computer programs and is widely used by brokerages and is now being used in the technology, telecommunications, energy and healthcare industries.

Even companies viewed as technology stalwarts or slow movers are benefiting, analysts said.

International Business Machines Corp. Chief Executive Louis Gerstner said in New York Wednesday that about $20 billion of IBM's $80 billion in 1998 revenue came from sales for its e-business hardware, software and services. He also spoke of huge pent-up demand for Internet connections in 2000 and beyond.

''This is a pervasive technology," said Donald Listwin, executive vice president at Cisco Systems Inc., the world's largest maker of Internet equipment. ''It is a disruptive force and it is going to change everything."

Listwin also sits on Tibco Software's board. Cisco has a sizable minority investment in Palo Alto, Calif.-based Tibco.

Consumers and businesses alike can also expect a surge in wireless devices that link to the Internet and are connected with hard-wired as well as other wireless devices.

''It will literally get woven into people's lives," Koogle said of forthcoming information and communications technologies.

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